

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

BASIC PROBLEMS



Progress Publishers • Moscow

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

BASIC PROBLEMS

*Russian text edited
by G. Glezerman and G. Kursanov*



PROGRESS PUBLISHERS

M O S C O W

Translated from the Russian

Edited by David Fidler

This book was written by a group of authors: Chapter I by *G. Glezerman*; Chapters II, IV, V by *M. Seleznyov*; Chapter III by *Amorosov*; Chapter VI by *V. Zamkovo*; Chapter VII by *V. Denisov*; Chapter VIII by *M. Yakovlev*; Chapter IX by *I. Kon* and *Y. Semyonov*.

ОСНОВНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ
ИСТОРИЧЕСКОГО МАТЕРИАЛИЗМА

На английском языке

First printing 1968

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CONTENTS

Chapter I. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A SCIENCE

1. The Revolution Brought About by Marx and Engels in Social Theories	7
2. The Relationship Between Historical and Dialectical Materialism	12
3. The Discovery of the Laws of Social Development by Historical Materialism	17
4. Interaction of Historical Materialism with Other Social Sciences	33
5. Historical Materialism and the Struggle for Social Progress	38

Chapter II. THE MODE OF PRODUCTION—THE DETERMINATIVE FACTOR OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Emergence of Human Society and Social Production	48
2. Social Production and Geographical Environment	51
3. Social Production and Population	56
4. Productive Forces and Relations of Production	61
5. Dialectics of Productive Forces and Relations of Production	70
6. The Laws Governing the Transition from the Old to the New Mode of Production	76

Chapter III. THE THEORY OF CLASSES AND CLASS STRUGGLE AND ITS CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

1. The Essence of the Class Division of Society. The Place and Role of the Class Struggle in the Historical Process	82
2. Classes and Class Struggle in Developed Capitalist Countries	92
3. Classes and Class Struggle in Countries Which Are Fighting for or Have Won National Independence	108
4. Classes and Class Struggle in the Socialist Countries in the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism	112
5. The Overcoming of Class Distinctions in the Period of Gradual Transition from Socialism to Communism	118
6. Class Struggle in the International Arena	124

Chapter IV. THEORY OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

1. Social Revolution as an Upheaval in the Economic Basis and Superstructure of Society	128
2. First Types of Social Revolutions	135
3. Bourgeois Anti-Feudal Revolutions	138
4. Proletarian, Socialist Revolution	145
5. Socialist Revolution as a World Revolutionary Process	153

Chapter V. PROBLEMS OF THE STATE

1. The Origin of the State. The Essence of the Exploiting State	159
2. Types of Exploiting States. The Bourgeois State and Its Functions	164
3. The Forms of the Bourgeois State	170
4. The Socialist State in the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism	178
5. Development of the Socialist State During Communist Construction	184

Chapter VI. WAR AS A SOCIO-HISTORICAL PHENOMENON. PROBLEMS OF WAR AND PEACE IN THE CONTEMPORARY EPOCH

1. War Is the Continuation of the Policy of Social Classes	192
2. The Dependence of Wars on Socio-Economic Factors	198
3. Marxist-Leninist Classification of Wars	202
4. Criticism of Contemporary Militarism	209

Chapter VII. THE ROLE OF THE MASSES AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

1. Gnoseological and Social Roots of Idealist Theories Concerning the Role of the Masses and the Individual in History	220
2. Marxism-Leninism on the Content of the Concept "People" and the Mounting Role of the Masses in History	226
3. The Role of the Masses in the Development of Material Production	231
4. The Role of the Masses in Socio-Political Activity	235
5. The Role of the Masses in the Development of Spiritual Culture	240
6. The Role of the Individual in History	244

Chapter VIII. SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS FORMS

1. Social Psychology and Ideology. Social Consciousness as a Reflection of Social Being	253
2. Class Character of Social Consciousness. Scientific and Unscientific Ideology	264

3. Relative Independence of Ideology. The Role of Ideas in Social Development	271
4. Forms and Specific Features of Social Consciousness	281
5. Science and Its Place in the Life of Society	302

Chapter IX. SOCIAL PROGRESS

1. The Concept and Criterion of Social Progress	308
2. Types of Social Progress	317
3. New Type of Social Progress	327

Chapter I

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A SCIENCE

Historical materialism is an integral part of Marxist philosophy. Its purpose is to study the structure of human society and the laws governing its development. With the creation of historical materialism social development came to be regarded by human thought as a natural historical process which, despite its complexity and diversity, was subjected to general laws. Thanks to the cognition of these laws it became possible scientifically to determine how and in what direction society develops. This is of inestimable importance for taking correct bearings in the development of modern society.

1. The Revolution Brought About by Marx and Engels in Social Theories

Before Marx and Engels made their contribution to social science it had been dominated by idealism. Not only idealists, but materialists as well regarded social development solely as a result of the change of social ideas. While taking a materialist view of nature, materialists were unable to extend it to social life.

What were the difficulties encountered by philosophers and historians in explaining social developments? There was above all the fact that, in contrast to nature, social life is a result of human activity, with men acting as conscious beings endowed with mind and volition, and pursuing definite aims. It was evident that things and phenomena in nature did not depend on the human mind, but that did not apply so patently to social life. Here the main thing was that social life was created by men themselves,

and that created the illusion that social relationships were built by men in accordance with their consciousness and were entirely determined by their conscious aims and aspirations.

In his article "Karl Marx", Lenin noted two basic flaws in all earlier historical theories which had prevented men from seeing social development as a law-governed process:

First, they examined, at best, only the *ideological motives* in the historical activity of men, without trying to trace the objective uniformities in the development of social relationships, without discovering the roots of these relationships in the degree of development of material production.

Second, they did not analyse the activity of the *masses*, but saw history mainly as the result of the activity of outstanding personalities.

Such an approach to history took into account only the most immediate, so to say, superficial motives in the activity of men, instead of the deeper reasons which underlie this activity. Idealist historians believed that to explain historical events it was enough to find out the aims and ideas that guided the men taking part in them. But, once that was established, there arose the question: *why* did these men set themselves those aims and not others? *What* gave rise to these aims? Idealists had no answer.

Let us take an example from contemporary life by way of illustration. Socialism is a most popular idea in the modern world. A third of humanity now lives in countries which have built or are building socialism. The idea of socialism has gripped the imagination of millions of men not only in Europe, but also in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Reactionaries frequently say that the great changes taking place in the world are basically due to the spread of socialist ideas, that the Communists are responsible for them. But this view of the contemporary historical process is reactionary and theoretically groundless. To explain the demise of capitalism and the rise of socialism in a number of countries by the sole fact that socialist ideas have gripped men's minds is to take a false—idealist—view of history. There is no doubt that the spread of socialist ideas among the masses plays a tremendous revolutionary role. But for all that, their spread is not the ulti-

mate *cause* of historical events. There is always this question: *why* did they spread so irresistibly? In effect, why has the idea of socialism become a tremendous force in our day, specifically in the mid-20th century, and not in some other age in the past? Why have hundreds of millions accepted it today? The fact is that the *objective development of society* has made the transition to socialism a historical necessity because capitalism has outlived itself as a system, and has become a barrier to social progress. This objective necessity is realised by men in the ideas of scientific socialism, and this explains their impetuous advance.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that materialism, in contrast to idealism, goes beyond the ideological motives in human activity, and probes for the material causes producing these motives. According to the materialist understanding of history, social being, that is, society's material life, is primary, and social consciousness, that is, spiritual activity, is secondary. Historical materialism does not at all deny the vast importance of ideas in social development, but it regards these ideas as a reflection of the living conditions of men, and as an expression of the requirements of the material development of social life.

The second basic flaw in earlier historical theories was the fact that they did not regard history as a history of the peoples, the masses, but chiefly as the activity of outstanding personalities. Most idealist scholars insist that ideas play the chief role in history, and draw the conclusion that history is made by those who produce the ideas, the outstanding men, the ideologists, the law-makers, etc. This view betrays a lack of confidence in the people's creative forces and inevitably leads to the denial of laws governing historical development. History appears as a jumble of chance events due to tricks of fortune or the particulars in the life of great men.

Idealist theories justify and help to consolidate the downtrodden state of the masses in exploiting societies; they are a reflection of the fear ideologists of the exploiting classes have in face of the historical activity of the people.

In contrast to idealism, historical materialism reveals the great historical part played by the people, by those

who create all the wealth of society, produce the material goods, and who have always been the decisive force of historical development. Marxism-Leninism does not at all deny the role of the individual in history, but it starts from the fact that that role can be correctly understood only on the basis of an understanding of the laws governing social development, and of a study of the living conditions of people and classes, which give rise to the need for outstanding men.

Historical materialism became possible only on the basis of definite theoretical and socio-historical premises, and had been largely prepared by the earlier development of social doctrines, specifically the works of the French and English economists of the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries, and the French historians of the first half of the 19th century. They raised many important questions, whose solution was needed for a scientific understanding of social progress.

To discover the most important laws of social development definite objective historical conditions were needed, and these took shape only when social relations attained a certain maturity.

Take the discovery of the law of class struggle without which it would have been impossible to comprehend the development of class society as a law-governed process, or to reduce the endless diversity of individual human activity to the activity of large groups of people distinguished from each other by their place in the social system of production. That society is divided into classes was known long before Marx, but the essence of the division remained unclear. In pre-capitalist formations it was covered up by caste divisions, by divisions into estates, and was veiled by a religious shroud, all of which naturally hindered the study of society's class division. Class relations were crystallised and laid bare only with society's further development. With the transition to capitalism it became patently evident that the class structure of society depends on its economic relations. Only then, as Engels had noted, "the riddle could be solved".¹

The idea of class struggle was put forward by the French

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1962, p. 393.

historians of the Restoration period. They were quite right in saying that the existence of classes was rooted in the conditions of life of civil society, that is, above all in economic relations, property relations, etc. But they were unable to give a scientific explanation of the origin of classes, and frequently thought they may have arisen in the conquest of one people by another. They also took a narrow bourgeois view of the class struggle itself. Analysing the history of the French and English bourgeois revolutions, they correctly proved that both were linked with the struggle of the "third estate", above all, the bourgeoisie, against the feudal landowners. But when the proletariat appeared on the historical scene as an independent force, they recoiled in horror from the idea of class struggle.

To draw the relevant conclusions from the existence of classes and to discover the law of class struggle it was necessary to accept the proletarian standpoint.

This example shows that there are definite historical conditions for understanding social phenomena, and that they depend on the development of class relationships and the social stand taken by thinkers in each epoch. And if this is taken into account it will not surprise us that the laws of social development were discovered later than many laws of nature. The ruling classes, with all the means of mental activity in their control, undoubtedly stood to gain from the advance of the natural sciences, which directly serve material production. And contrarywise, they had no stake in the knowledge of the essence of social life, because they were doing everything to conceal from the working people the basis of their own domination. The oppressed classes, however, were not developed enough and fettered by too many superstitions to understand the conditions of their own liberation. With the emergence of the proletariat, there arrived on the historical scene the first class which was interested in the elimination of all class oppression, and consequently, in a most precise and totally objective knowledge of the tendencies of social development. For the proletariat, it is an objective necessity to get to know the laws of social development, as otherwise it is impossible to transform capitalist society into socialist society through revolution and start the planned construction of communism.

The discovery of the laws of social development turned socialism from a utopia into a science. Only when Marx and Engels had formulated the materialist understanding of history and showed that society, like nature, was in continuous dialectical development, it could be said that socialism was not an invention of dreamers but a historical necessity and that it would inevitably take the place of capitalism as a result of the class struggle of the proletariat and its allies.

The theoretical foundation of Marx's scientific socialism is philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism—and his economic doctrine.

2. The Relationship Between Historical and Dialectical Materialism

Marxism is an integrated and consistent scientific world outlook which organically includes dialectical and historical materialism, Marx's economic doctrine and his theory of scientific socialism.

The revisionists, who are enemies of Marxism clothed in Marxist raiment, have been trying to undermine the unity of the various component parts of Marxism. The revisionists of the Second International have repeatedly asserted, for instance, that Marxism has no philosophy of its own; that Marx's economic doctrine and his theory of scientific socialism can be combined with any philosophical teaching. Among the opportunist parties, indifference to philosophy was considered the right form, and Karl Kautsky's attitude was characteristic in this respect. Professing support for dialectical materialism and agreeing that historical materialism and idealist philosophy were incompatible, he, in actual fact, encouraged the Neo-Kantians and the Machists in their attempts to wed Marxism to idealism. In his *Die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung*, he alleged that the main thing for Marx and Engels was not the truth, but the way to it, that is, method. In this way he separated method from world outlook, of which it is, in fact, a part, and then went on to announce his complete indifference to world outlook. In his opinion, "the materialist view of history is not connected with material-

ist philosophy. It is compatible with any world outlook which resorts to dialectical materialism or which is not, at any rate, antagonistic to it. It makes no difference whether this world outlook is called materialism or opposes mechanistic materialism, whether it prefers to be known as realism or monism, positivism or sensationalism, empiricism or empirio-criticism." Kautsky declared that the materialist view of history "was compatible not only with the views of Mach and Avenarius, but with those of many other philosophers as well".¹

The efforts to combine Marxism with a philosophy that is alien to it have been and are being made by the revisionists to deprive Marxism of its revolutionary essence—materialist dialectics. Renouncing dialectical materialism, they crudely distort both historical materialism, Marx's economic doctrine and his theory of scientific socialism. Thus, the Neo-Kantian revisionists replaced the theory of scientific socialism by an "ethical socialism", while the revisionist followers of Mach cleared the way for combining socialism with religion or with refined obscurantism.

History has shown that any attempt to split up the integrated doctrine of Marxism inevitably leads to its distortion. In his fight against philosophical revisionism, Lenin emphasised the unity and coherence of dialectical and historical materialism. He wrote that the philosophy of Marxism was cast from one piece of steel, and that it was impossible to remove a single premise, a single essential part, without departing from objective truth and falling a prey to bourgeois-reactionary falsehood.²

Wherein lies the intrinsic bond between dialectical and historical materialism?

Historical materialism is the result of the application of materialism and dialectics to the study of human society; consequently, it rests on the general philosophical materialist world outlook. At the same time historical materialism makes this outlook consistent and complete; only with the creation of historical materialism did philosophical materialism become capable of giving a scientific interpretation of social as well as natural phenomena.

¹ K. Kautsky, *Die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung*, Berlin, Band I, 1927, S. 28.

² See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 326.

That is why historical materialism is an *integral part* of Marxist philosophy, without which the Marxist-Leninist world outlook is inconceivable.

Above all else historical materialism gives the answer to the fundamental question of philosophy—the relationship between *social being* and *social consciousness*.

In society, as in nature, we find two groups of phenomena—material and spiritual. On the one hand, there is the *material life of society*: men produce the material goods (food, clothes, houses, means of transport, etc.) which they need to exist. In the process of production, men enter into definite economic relations, which extend both to production, and to the exchange and distribution of the products of their labour. Men are also connected with each other by definite relationships in the reproduction of the population, with the biological process of the continuation of the race taking various social forms. In plain language, people live, work, have children, produce and exchange the goods they need, etc. As a result of all this, definite relations are formed between them which constitute the material life of society, or, as it is called, *social being*.

The other side of social life is the *spiritual life* of the community, or *social consciousness*. This includes social ideas, views and sentiments expressed in various forms of social consciousness: political and juridical ideas, ethics, moral standards, artistic works, religious creeds, philosophical doctrines, etc.

A scientific understanding of social development requires first of all a solution of the question, which of these sides of social life is primary and which, secondary. The question of relationship between social consciousness and social being is as important to historical materialism as the general question of the relationship between consciousness and being is to dialectical materialism. This is the basic issue of the doctrine of society, and its different solutions delimit the materialist and the idealist views of history.

The answer to this question above all reveals the unity of dialectical and historical materialism. Dialectical materialism recognises that objective reality is independent of consciousness; historical materialism recognises that social

being is objective reality independent of social consciousness. In either case, it is consciousness, including social consciousness, that is regarded as a more or less faithful reflection of objective reality.

Of course, to answer this question in application to society it is necessary to take into account the specific features of social life. We know that dialectical materialism designates as material things, phenomena and relationships existing outside and independently of human consciousness. But social life differs from nature in that all social phenomena and relationships are the result of human activity, and men are conscious beings. Thus the following question arises: are there any relationships in society which do not depend on the social consciousness of men and are not determined by it, but on the contrary, determine it? Historical materialism proves that such relationships actually exist, that they are material in character and in their sum total constitute social being (discussed in greater detail in section 3 of this chapter). This has served to extend the principal propositions of philosophical materialism to the study of human society, and also defined them concretely in the light of the specific features of social life, as a distinct part of the material world.

Thus, the principal propositions of historical materialism are a continuation and specification of the propositions of dialectical materialism as applied to the study of social life; there is an inner connection between them.

This does not mean, however, that dialectical materialism precedes historical materialism. It would be wrong to assume that dialectical materialism took shape first and was only then applied to the study of human society. An examination of the historical shaping of Marxist philosophy shows that dialectical and historical materialism were created by Marx and Engels as a unity, at one and the same time of their development. The motive force behind this development were the real requirements of revolutionary struggle, which enabled Marx to see that Hegel's idealism was untenable, and that the idealistic idea of the state as an embodiment of world reason did not tally with real social life, permeated with the clash of classes and their material interests. Consequently, it was the analysis of social problems that was crucial in Marx's elaboration

of the new world outlook. The transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democratism to communism, which is evident in Marx's articles in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, was completed in the joint works of Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*, which outline the basic propositions of dialectical and historical materialism.

Dialectical and historical materialism are an indissoluble whole: neither is conceivable without the other.

The creation of historical materialism was a *sine qua non* in overcoming the limitations of the old materialism. It has been said that all the materialists before Marx took a materialist view of nature only and remained idealists when it came to social phenomena. That is why their materialism was limited. Philosophical materialism could not be complete: it could not take in the whole world in a single view so long as it stopped short of human society. Only when Marx and Engels worked out their historical materialism was philosophical materialism completed to the top, thus producing an integrated materialist world outlook.

The scientific, Marxist view of the role of practice, and the significance of men's socio-historical activity for the advance of their knowledge could be worked out only on the basis of historical materialism. Dialectical materialism disclosed the significance of practice as the basis of cognition, the aims of cognition and the criterion of truth. But in contrast to some pre-Marxist materialists (Francis Bacon, for example), Marxism does not reduce practice to scientific and technical experimentation but extends it to the entire socio-historical activity of men aimed at the transformation of nature and society.

Marx regarded philosophy as an instrument for the revolutionary remaking of the world. This active character of Marxist philosophy cannot be understood without historical materialism, which shows the need for practical effort on the part of men to change their social relationships. Already in *The Holy Family*, Marx and Engels showed that the working class, if it is to liberate itself, must not only overcome the category of capital in its thinking, as the Left Hegelians believed, but also eliminate capitalist relationships in practice. The materialist view of history thrws

full light on the meaning of Marx's brilliant idea: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it."¹

Thus, dialectical and historical materialism are organically and indissolubly bound up with each other; they are the two parts of one world outlook. That is why any attempt to separate them is harmful and futile.

3. The Discovery of the Laws of Social Development by Historical Materialism

Human society and the general laws of its development are the subject matter of historical materialism. Dialectical materialism investigates the thinking-being relationship and gives the answer to the questions: what is the world as a whole and what are the general laws governing its motion and development; as for historical materialism it answers the same questions as applied to society—as a special part of the material world.

Thanks to historical materialism social science has become a genuine science capable of discovering laws of social development. Natural science has long ago recognised the law-governed nature of phenomena, whereas social science proved this only with the creation of historical materialism. In this lies the great service rendered by Marx.

"Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature," said Engels, "so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in

¹ Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1964, p. 647.

the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case."¹

Many contemporary Western sociologists completely deny the existence of objective laws of social development. This, of course, is not accidental. In his article "Socialism Demolished Again" directed against P. Struve's book *The Economy and Price*, Lenin disclosed the reasons underlying this. In his work Struve asserted that the idea of natural law in political economy had collapsed and that the law of value was nothing more than a myth. For the sake of destroying scientific socialism he denied the existence of social science in general. This, said Lenin, reflected the "dread of science"² inherent in the bourgeoisie as in all other moribund classes.

As long as the bourgeoisie remained revolutionary its ideologists endeavoured to discover the laws of history which at the time, so to say, worked for the bourgeoisie. In that period the interests of the bourgeoisie in some measure coincided with those of social progress. But when the bourgeoisie turned into a reactionary class, its interests clashed with the requirements of social progress. It has become a moribund class trying to stop or reverse the course of history, to go against its laws. This attitude, naturally, leads to a denial of the objective laws of social development.

The champions of the old system may have different theoretical views but many of them are united in their urge to undermine the belief of working people that history is governed by laws which are fully understandable and can be applied for the benefit of man.

Falling back on the fact that in society people always act as conscious beings, many Western sociologists deny the possibility of the existence of objective laws, that is, laws that are independent of the consciousness or the will of the people. Recognition of these laws, they allege, is incompatible with the fact that people make their own history. To speak about the laws of history, says the prominent French sociologist Raymond Aron, means sinning against science, for concrete historical acts, thoughts and

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 167.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 197.

actions are so intricately shaped that no one can say in advance what their final result might be. History, in his opinion, is a lottery.

Needless to say, historical materialism does not deny the fact that men make their own history. But this does not in the least mean that they consciously build all their social relationships. The determinative force of social development is the change and development of production, which is the product of human activity. But they effect this production always in definite historical conditions which they do not choose at their own discretion and which exist independently of them. Therefore the course of historical developments is determined not only by the conscious actions of men. It obeys objective laws which do not depend on their volition or consciousness and which dominated men like the elemental forces of nature throughout the whole period prior to the establishment of socialism.

Having discovered the material basis of social life, Marx and Engels proved the existence of objective laws in social development. They classified social relations into two types—material and ideological. The material relations include first and foremost production, economic relations between men. In contrast to ideological social relations, material relations take shape independently of human volition and of consciousness, as an essential result of their activity aimed at maintaining their existence. Ideological relations (such as political, legal, ethical, etc.) are a reflection of the material relations; they are formed, initially passing through the consciousness of people, and are established by men in accordance with their views and ideas.

Production, economic relations in their entirety form society's economic structure, its real basis, whereas ideological relations constitute the superstructure of this basis. The superstructure, which is formed over a definite economic basis, includes both the social views of men (that is, their political, juridical, ethical, aesthetic, religious and philosophical views), and the organisations and institutions (as, for example, the state, parties, other socio-political organisations, the Church, etc.) which consolidate these views and which they establish in conformity with these views.

Lenin wrote: "Only the reduction of social relations to

production relations and of the latter to the level of the productive forces, provided a firm basis for the conception that the development of formations of society is a process of natural history."¹ Thanks to this it was proved that objective laws which are determined by the nature of the material relations between men, and, consequently, which are independent of their volition or conscience, operate in the history of society.

Elaborating these ideas in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin noted that "in all social formations of any complexity—and in the capitalist social formation in particular—people in their intercourse are *not conscious* of what kind of social relations are being formed, in accordance with what laws they develop, etc".² Thus, for example, when the peasant began selling his grain on the market he entered into "intercourse" with the world grain producers. But he did not know what sort of economic relations were being formed in the process, although he may have been ruined by them as, for instance, by a fall in prices on the world market. The consciousness of the peasant did not in the least determine the nature of these economic relations; on the contrary, it changed in conformity with them.

Of course, each individual participant in production acts consciously: he deliberately changes production technology, exchanges his products for others, etc. But the activity of millions of producers modifies the conditions of their social being; these changes not only do not depend on their social consciousness, but they may not be even realised by them beforehand. "The fact that you live and conduct your business, beget children, produce products and exchange them, gives rise to an objectively necessary chain of events, a chain of development, which is independent of your *social* consciousness, and is never grasped by the latter completely."³

Historical facts show that the laws of social development were in operation long before they were cognised by men. The law of value, for example, is operating for 5-7

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 140-41.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 323.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

thousand years now, yet it was cognised only two centuries ago. This proves that the laws of social development are objective and independent of human consciousness.

A social law always expresses the objective, intrinsic connection between social phenomena which springs from the nature of these phenomena and is not established by men according to their will. Yet this does not refute the fact that men act in history as conscious beings.

Historical materialism does not in the least deny the diversity of motives determining the behaviour of people, dealt with by Raymond Aron. But that does not mean that history is a lottery and that it is impossible to discover any laws governing the activity of men. A sociologist cannot undertake to foretell the concrete actions of an individual, but it is a different matter when it comes to the activity of great masses of men, such as classes in a class society. The Marxist theory of classes, as has been noted, provided the guiding principle for synthesising a seemingly endless diversity of actions by individuals. For this purpose it was necessary not only to use them as a basis for studying the actions of large groups of men, but also materialistically to define the very concept of a social group. The theory of classes and class struggle provided an objective criterion for distinguishing social groups and showed the way of raising the individual to the social. This theory has shown that the source of the contradictory aspirations of great masses operating in history is the difference in the condition of classes into which a given society is divided, while the division of society into classes depends on the different positions they occupy in a definite historical system of social production.

The character and direction of the activity of the masses are always determined by the conditions of their material life and although people themselves change these conditions, they cannot choose them at will. Consequently, the fact that men make their own history does not mean that they make it the way they would like.

Many sociologists who oppose recognition of the laws of social development claim that such recognition dooms men to inactivity. This "argument" was advanced by the well-known German lawyer and sociologist Rudolf Stammeler. If you recognise socialism as being objectively neces-

sary, he asked Marxists, why are you forming a party to fight for socialism? If, for example, a lunar eclipse is necessary then it will arrive of its own accord, and no one organises a party to fight for its arrival. Today a similar argument is advanced by the French sociologist Georges Gurvitch. "Is not economy," he writes, "human activity, production, struggle for domination over nature and the achievement of a better lot in distribution and, in particular, in the struggle of classes? If all this wealth of conditions and human energy can be considered as determined then what need is there for constant appeals to revolutionary will to accelerate the course of events?"¹

Let us examine these arguments one by one.

It is clear that Stammler's argument is a sophism and rests on a jumble of absolutely different phenomena. Of course, such a phenomenon as a lunar eclipse occurs in nature independently of the activity of men. In history, however, nothing takes place independently of human activity.

Recognition of the objective nature of the laws of social development by no means implies that these laws operate independently of men; these laws govern the activity of men themselves.

What does objective necessity of socialism mean from the Marxist point of view? It means that capitalism has outlived itself and has become a brake on history; that the development of material life in society has posed before it the urgent problem of changing its relations of production, and bringing them in line with the new productive forces which have already outgrown the bounds of capitalism. The development of capitalism gave rise to a class—the proletariat—which because of its objective position in the capitalist mode of production is forced to fight against the bourgeoisie for socialism, since there is no other way in which it can emancipate itself. Thus, the class struggle of the proletariat for the building of socialist society is itself an historical necessity. Therefore, to assert that socialism is an objective necessity does not mean to say that it will arrive of itself, automatically.

No less groundless is Gurvitch's argument which contrasts human activity and energy that can accelerate the

¹ *Les lettres nouvelles*, Juillet-Août 1958, p. 65.

course of events and enhance the determinative nature of human activity. Determinism and fatalism are not one and the same thing.

Critics of historical materialism make every effort to ascribe to the Marxists a fatalistic view of history. In their understanding of Marxism, they are no better than Dr. Ryakhin, a character in Maxim Gorky's novel *The Town of Okurov*, who consoled a young man overcome by doubts with the following words: "Reason philosophically: a person can neither accelerate events, nor retard them, just as he cannot stop the rotation of the earth or the development of progressive paralysis, or this idiotic rain, for example. What will be, will be; what cannot be, cannot be; no matter what you do. This, my friend, is proved by Marx, so there's nothing more to be said." But when the young man asked: "But Alexei Stepanovich . . . people must do something, don't they?" Dr. Ryakhin replied: "They have been told—propagate, multiply and populate the earth, the rest will take care of itself."¹

Fatalism is still frequently used to justify passiveness and repudiation of revolutionary struggle. But nothing is more alien to Marxism than fatalism. A fatalistic understanding of history is typical not of Marxists but of those who distort Marxism. In Russia they were "legal Marxists", Economists and Mensheviks and in the West—the Bernsteinians, the Kautskyites and others. Contemporary revisionists, who view the consolidation of socialism as a spontaneous process, also adhere to the same positions. But what is there in common between Marxism-Leninism, which is permeated with revolutionary spirit, and these advocates of the theory of spontaneity, these vendors of bourgeois ideological wares? "Marxism," Lenin wrote, "differs from all other socialist theories in the remarkable way it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius, and revolutionary initiative of the masses—and also, of course, of individuals, groups, organisations, and

¹ M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Moscow, 1950, p. 67 (in Russian).

parties that are able to discover and achieve contact with one or another class."¹

In contrast to subjectivism and fatalism, Marxism finds the sources of transforming reality in reality itself. It is possible to change the world only through the application of its objective laws. The transforming activity of man is successful only if he takes into account the historical necessity and acts in accordance with it.

Objectively analysing the correlation of class forces, Lenin stressed, "I do not in the least justify reality, but, on the contrary, indicate in this reality *itself* the deepest sources (though they are invisible at first sight) and the forces that can transform it."²

To discover in reality itself the sources and the forces that transform it is the essence of the Marxist approach to the historical process which organically combines objectivity with a revolutionary spirit.

Just as dialectical materialism recognises the ability of consciousness to exert a retroactive influence through purposeful practical activity on being, of which it is a reflection, so does historical materialism recognise the active role of social ideas and their ability to influence the development of social being.

Social consciousness performs an active role in history but the sources of its development lie in the conditions of social being. Changes in the conditions of material life set men definite historical tasks, as for instance, the necessity to abolish an obsolete system. Once such an historical necessity has arisen and found its reflection in the consciousness of leading social forces, it also determines the direction of their practical activity. Sooner or later, this necessity is realised by the progressing forces of society whose interests clash with those of the moribund forces, which are endeavouring to preserve the old system. The transition from one social system to another is effected precisely as a result of the struggle of these forces.

It is clear from the above that the conscious activity of men is not a passive reflection but an organic part of the historical process. It becomes an essential link in the law-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 31.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, p. 330.

governed development of society. Thus, for example, the historical necessity for the transition to socialism does not imply its automatic victory. It only expresses the dominant tendency of social development in the contemporary epoch and is realised in the struggle by means of the conscious activity of the progressive social forces headed by the working class. At the same time the scale of the conscious influence of men on the course of events is extensive. How events will shape in a given country and how soon the tendency towards socialism will gain the upper hand in it depend on many objective and subjective factors, including the level of consciousness and organisation of the working class; whether or not it has allies; the position and the policy of a working-class party; the degree of influence exerted on the masses by the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties, including reformist parties which are bent on splitting the working class; the strength and the policy of the ruling classes resisting the advance towards socialism, etc. Marxists naturally reject the assertions of the fatalists that history can neither be accelerated nor slowed down. They acknowledge the possibility of speeding up the course of historical events through the conscious activity of the progressive forces of society, but do not ignore the possibility of a temporary retardation of social development by the reactionary forces in their effort to stave off their doom.

Opposing recognition of the objective laws of social development many philosophers and sociologists claim that in contrast to natural sciences, the social sciences are altogether incapable of discovering general laws inasmuch as they deal with individual, unique events.

This view, for example, was advanced at the turn of the century by representatives of the Freiburg school of Neo-Kantians (Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert, and others). The gist of their idea was that natural science and history were antipodal. The aim of natural science was to study and generalise recurrent phenomena. So it discarded the individual peculiarities of the objects studied and laid down general laws, while history, they asserted, had the task of studying individual events with all their specific features and, consequently, there could be no historical laws. "For the natural scientist," Windelband said, "an individual object of his investigation as such never has

any scientific value; he needs it only insofar as he considers himself to be entitled to examine it as a type, as a specific case of the generic concept which can be developed having the object as a starting point; he dwells only on those aspects of the object which are important for understanding a general regularity. As for the historian, his task is to recreate in the ideal form some product of the past with all its individual features."¹

The historian must also be guided by certain general propositions in order to distinguish the important from the unimportant. But history, according to the Freiburg school, must view the general only as a typical, ideal model. "The universal in history," Rickert wrote, "is not a universal law of nature for which the specific is only an instance in any greater number of others, but a cultural value which is gradually developed in the unique and the individual and only in that way realised."²

Some historians, like the German scholar Eduard Meyer, linked up the denial of recurrence in history with an idealistic understanding of the role of the individual; they held that history was dominated by the free will of an outstanding personality who lent individual distinction to historical events.

To back this view frequent references are made to the fact that historical events occur only once and are never repeated and that, therefore, there can be no laws of history. From this the conclusion is drawn that it is impossible to foresee historical developments. For instance, Gerhard Ritter, a German historian, asserted at the Tenth Congress of Historical Sciences held in Rome in 1955 that political history was a history of singular and unique events, that it was always new, inimitable and unpredictable.

These ideas have long since been refuted by the founders of Marxism-Leninism. In his work *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* Lenin proved that the whole of pre-Marxist sociology was unable to discover the recurrence of events in social

¹ Wilhelm Windelband, *Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft*, Strassburg, 1894, S. 16.

² Heinrich Rickert, *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft*, Freiburg, 1899, S. 51.

life precisely due to the fact that it took an idealist view of historical development, confining itself to ideological social relations. With that kind of approach bourgeois historians and sociologists naturally "could not observe recurrence and regularity in the social phenomena of the various countries, and their science was at best only a description of these phenomena, a collection of raw material".¹

By discovering the material basis of social life, and identifying the sum total of relations of production as society's economic structure, historical materialism made it possible, as Lenin said, "to apply to these relations that general scientific criterion of recurrence whose applicability to sociology the subjectivists denied".² This analysis of material social relations made it possible to reveal the recurrence of events and generalise the social systems in various countries into the basic concept of socio-economic formation.

What is a *socio-economic formation*? It is a definite *stage* in social development, a definite *type* of society. There has been a succession of types of society: the primitive-communal system, the historically first type of society, was replaced by the slave-owning system which was subsequently succeeded by feudalism; as a result of long development, feudalism turned into capitalism which is now giving way to communism whose first stage is socialism. Each of these societies is a definite socio-economic formation, or, as Marx put it, "*a society at a definite stage of historical development, a society with a peculiar, distinctive character*".³

The concept of socio-economic formation synthesises the most important, determinative features of a socio-economic system in various countries at the same stage of historical development. Therefore it provides the criterion of recurrence in the history of society; this concept reflects what is common to various countries passing through the same stage of historical development.

Each socio-economic formation is a specific social organism in which all elements are interconnected and interconditioned. It is wrong, therefore, arbitrarily to play up

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 140.

² Ibid.

³ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 90.

or combine various aspects of social life, disregarding their organic interconnection. Marxism views society "as a living organism in a state of constant development (and not as something mechanically concatenated and therefore permitting all sorts of arbitrary combinations of separate social elements), an organism the study of which requires an objective analysis of the production relations that constitute the given social formation and an investigation of its laws of functioning and development".¹

Each socio-economic formation is based on a definite *mode of production* characterised by its own productive forces and relations of production. The productive forces of society are the means of production created by it, above all the implements of labour, and also the men who set them in motion and produce the material wealth. On the basis of definite productive forces there arise, as we shall see in the following chapter, relations of production, i.e., economic relations between men—the other side of the mode of production. It is these relations of production, their definite type, that chiefly characterise the distinguishing features of each formation.

But that does not mean that a socio-economic formation is reduced to the economic structure of society. Writing about Marx's *Capital*, Lenin said that the investigation of relations of production in their development make up the skeleton of that work. The whole point is, Lenin added, that Marx did not stop at the skeleton but clothed it in flesh and blood; he traced superstructures corresponding to the relations of production and as a result *Capital* "showed the whole capitalist social formation to the reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the class antagonism inherent in production relations, with the bourgeois political superstructure that protects the rule of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family relationships".²

Thus, the concept of socio-economic formation embraces all aspects of society's life at a definite stage of its development.

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 165.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

Each socio-economic formation has its own specific laws of development which are distinct from those of the other formations. This is particularly evident in the contemporary epoch when communism, a new socio-economic formation, is coming to replace capitalism. As socialism takes the place of capitalism, the following economic laws of the latter cease to operate: the anarchy of production, the inevitability of economic crises, and so forth. They give way to new economic laws peculiar to socialism, such as the law of planned and proportional development, etc. This applies not only to economic laws, for with the elimination of antagonistic classes the law of class struggle inherent in earlier class socio-economic formations also ceases to operate.

With a knowledge of the laws governing the development of socio-economic formations, it is possible to predict the direction which various countries will take as they pass through definite stages of economic life.

When Russia entered the capitalist stage in the second half of the 19th century, the Russian Marxists foresaw that she would not be able to avoid the class differentiation and the ruination of the peasantry, or the periodic economic crises and other phenomena accompanying the capitalist mode of production. Of course, capitalism has its specific features in each country, depending on the peculiarities of its historical environment, national conditions, etc. However, the operation of the basic laws of capitalism is in evidence in all countries at the capitalist stage of development.

In this context, it will be easily seen that the assertions that history consists of unique events alone is not true. Of course, an event like the 1789 revolution in France is unique, but bourgeois revolutions, one of which was the 1789 revolution, have been recurring. Marxism disclosed the bourgeois essence of the democratic reforms which took place in France in the 18th and 19th centuries and in other countries as well. All countries, which have gone through the period of decline in the feudal mode of production and the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, passed through bourgeois revolutions. They took place in different historical conditions and differed from one another, but that does not conflict with the fact that they revealed

a general historical regularity, namely, that the transition from feudalism to capitalism is effected through bourgeois revolution.

The assertion that history consists of solitary and absolutely individual, non-recurrent events is just as false as the opposite view that all of history tends to repeat itself. Actually, every historical event is a unity of the recurrent and the non-recurrent. It appears to be unique in its individual concrete features. Take the chain of events which led to the victory of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia: the dual power; the July demonstration and its fusillade by the Provisional Government; the Kornilov revolt; the Bolshevisation of the Soviets, etc.—in that particular sequence it will never recur anywhere. But in all these events there are those features which, with corresponding modifications, may be repeated in other historical conditions. Taking the most essential features, which determined the inevitability of the October Socialist Revolution—the growth of contradictions between the productive forces and the obsolete capitalist relations of production; the sharpening of the conflict between labour and capital; the growth of influence of the proletariat and the majority of the working and exploited people taking its side, etc.—we shall find a manifestation of the general laws in the development of socialist revolution, which operate in other proletarian revolutions as well.

Thus, in spite of the individual features and unique aspects of historical events, it is possible to find recurrence in history as well, and consequently, to discover the general laws governing the development of events. A denial of such recurrence is tantamount to a denial of social science itself.

In conclusion, let us look at yet another question relating to the understanding of the nature of the laws of social science, namely, the specific features of these laws as compared with those in natural science.

Above we showed the futility of the efforts to counterpose the science of society and that of nature. But one should not go from one extreme to another, that is, to identify the laws investigated by these sciences. There is a qualitative distinction between the laws of social life and the laws of nature.

Of course, there are some general laws which operate in both spheres. They are laws of dialectics, such as the law of the unity and conflict of opposites, which reveals the internal source of development. But these laws manifest themselves differently in the various spheres of reality. The material world passes through a series of stages in its development, and "at each stage different laws, i.e., different phenomenal forms of the same universal motion, predominate".¹ Each sphere of phenomena and each form of motion has its own concrete laws.

Human society also has its own laws. Therefore the laws of natural science which may be of very extensive significance (such as the law of the conservation and transformation of energy), cannot explain social phenomena. Man's historical development is guided by special laws inherent only in human society.

Attempts to explain social development by natural laws are doomed to failure. Their mechanical application to social phenomena gravely distorts the essence of these phenomena and leads to highly reactionary conclusions.

Many politicians and scholars have tried and are trying to explain social development by biological laws. The well-known English sociologist Herbert Spencer tried to draw an analogy between the development of society and that of a biological organism. He explained the origin of classes by an analogy with the separation of tissue in an organism into the external and internal layers. The external relations in society produce the army, the government and the ruling classes, just as in the organism the exoderm produces the skin and the nervous system. The class of subordinates, workers in agriculture and industry, said Spencer, corresponded to the internal tissues of the organism. The classes engaged in manual labour play the same role in discharging the function of maintaining the life of society as the component parts of the surface of the digestive tract play in the maintenance of the living body. His followers frequently went to even greater absurdities. The French sociologist R. Worms compared the police and the prisons with the kidneys and the sudoriferous glands: both, he said, removed waste from the organism. For all their

¹ Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1966, p. 239.

absurdity, these assertions have a certain class bias. After all, if classes correspond to biological organs, then class division of society is "natural" and is an unalterable law, while the class struggle is "abnormal": can hands and feet "rebel" against the head?

Equally reactionary are the attempts to apply Darwin's "struggle for existence" to social life. The advocates of "social Darwinism" insist that the struggle for existence, with the survival of the fittest, lies at the basis of human history. The poverty of the working people under capitalism, the ruin of the small farmers and craftsmen and the unemployment among the workers are declared to be a "law of nature", an inevitable effect of the struggle for existence between individuals, while wars are said to be a result of the struggle for existence between nations or races. In reality, however, the poverty of the working people and unemployment of the proletariat are due to the laws of the capitalist mode of production and not to any "eternal laws of nature". Wars are provoked not by biological but by social causes.

Marx and Engels long ago proved the absurdity of the attempts to apply biological laws to social phenomena. The Darwinian idea of "struggle for life", which has a definite meaning for plant and animal life, becomes an empty phrase when applied to human society. In a letter to Kugelmann Marx wrote: "Herr Lange ... has made a great discovery. The whole of history can be brought under a single great natural law. This natural law is the *phrase* (in this application Darwin's expression becomes nothing but a phrase) 'struggle for life', and the content of this phrase is the Malthusian law of population or, rather, overpopulation. So, instead of analysing the 'struggle for life' as represented historically in various definite forms of society, all that has to be done is to translate every concrete struggle into the phrase 'struggle for life', and this phrase itself into the Malthusian 'population fantasy'. One must admit that this is a very impressive method—for swaggering, sham-scientific, bombastic ignorance and intellectual laziness."¹

The absurdity of attempts to apply biological laws to

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 239-40.

society is evident if only from the fact that man has a different relationship with nature than the animals.

Animals adapt themselves to nature *passively*, whereas man *actively* changes his environment and acts on nature with the aid of his implements of labour. Animals, at best, develop to the point of *collecting* the means of subsistence, whereas man *produces* them. This alone makes the application of the laws of animal life to human society inadmissible.

The outstanding Russian Darwinist, Klimenty Timiryazev, justly noted that "the theory of the struggle for existence stops at the threshold of cultural history. The whole of man's intelligent, cultural activity is a struggle against the struggle for existence".¹

The empty "struggle for existence" catchword cannot explain the wealth of content in human history, nor can it provide the key to why a given social system gives way to a specific new system, and not to some other; why, for example, the capitalist system is supplanted by the socialist system.

What has been said about the inadmissibility of applying biological laws to society also holds true for the attempts to explain historical development by the laws of mechanics, physics, etc.

Thus, society is governed by its own laws which are based on the development of the modes of material production, which succeed each other over the centuries. These general laws of social development were discovered by the theory of historical materialism.

4. Interaction of Historical Materialism with Other Social Sciences

Historical materialism is by far not the only social science. There are many other social sciences, including economic, juridical and aesthetic.

Historical materialism is distinct from them primarily because it is the most general social science. It is a general theory of the historical process based on the investigation

¹ K. Timiryazev, *Works*, Vol. V, Moscow, 1938, p. 426 (in Russian).

of the development of socio-economic formations, and is also a method for the cognition of social phenomena.

The laws of historical materialism are general in a two-fold sense. First, they operate in all or in some of the socio-economic formations; second, they give expression to the relationships between the different spheres and aspects of the life of society as an integral organism. That is the chief difference between historical materialism and many other social sciences.

Political economy studies one aspect of social life, the economic relations—relations of production, exchange and distribution of products; the juridical sciences study the state and law, political and juridical relationships between men; other sciences investigate various aspects of society's spiritual life: aesthetics, the history of literature and literary criticism, pedagogics, etc. By contrast, historical materialism discloses the connections between the various aspects of social life; it shows, for instance, the connection between the economic system of society and the political institutions and ideological forms arising on that basis. In contrast to the particular social sciences, it deals with the development of society as a whole.

It is true that one more social science makes a study of society as a whole and analyses the interaction of all its aspects. It is history proper. The well-known Soviet scholar Boris Grekov said that "a distinctive feature of history as a science is that it investigates the development of society as a whole, the aggregate of phenomena of social life, all its aspects in their interconnection and interconditionality".¹

But it is the task of history to reflect and explain the course of events in all its concreteness, diversity and detail; historical materialism, on the other hand, is a theoretical science, whose task is not to describe the course of events but to discover the general laws governing the concrete developments in the life of all peoples.

The laws studied by the concrete social sciences operate in various spheres of social life: economics, state, morals, etc. The laws of historical materialism characterise social

¹ *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, Second Ed., Vol. 19, p. 28 (in Russian).

development as interconnection and interrelation between the various aspects of social life, for instance, social being and social consciousness, economics and politics, etc.

In that context, there are the general law of class struggle, although it does not operate in every formation, and the general law of social revolution, although social revolutions will no longer take place with the transition to a classless society. The law of class struggle says that in societies divided into antagonistic classes "all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes, and that the existence and thereby the collisions, too, between these classes are in turn conditioned by the degree of development of their economic position, by the mode of their production and of their exchange determined by it".¹ The law of social revolution also embraces the changes taking place in various spheres of social life: economics, politics and ideology; social revolution is a fundamental change in all these spheres of social life which takes place when one socio-economic formation gives way to a higher one.

What then is the relationship between the general laws of social development and the laws governing the development of various aspects of social life?

Each socio-economic formation is a special social organism which originates, develops and passes into a higher formation in accordance with its own laws. The laws governing the development of various aspects of social life can be understood only if they are examined as part of a whole, in connection with general laws, bearing in mind that the decisive influence on social development is exercised by the movement of the economy, which ultimately determines the direction of historical progress.

That is a genuinely scientific approach to the study of specific laws, and it is antipodal to the approach of modern "microsociology", which does not regard society as an integral organism, but as a conglomeration of heterogeneous social phenomena. Very often, the "microsociologists" study insignificant and very minor aspects of

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 246.

social life. What is most important, however, is that the examination of these aspects in isolation from the whole leads to absolutely unscientific conclusions. The research into specifics by many "microsociologists" turns into a means of distracting attention from the main tendencies of contemporary social development and its class contradictions, and of glossing them over. Lenin's criticism of Struve is fully applicable to such research: it is "a denial of science, a tendency to despise all generalisations, to hide from all the 'laws' of historical development, and make the trees screen the wood".¹

It does not follow from the criticism of "microsociology" that Marxists deny the need to study the separate aspects of social life and social phenomena. On the contrary, they consider it very important. Empirical surveys are necessary and, given the right scientific approach, can be of great theoretical and practical value. But they can be very fruitful only if they take into account that each society is a living, continuously developing organism, whose study requires above all an objective analysis of the relations of production forming its economic foundation.

In the countries of the socialist community social investigations are a necessary element of scientific leadership in the building of new society. With their help it is possible to study the development of modes of labour and life, democracy, the problems connected with the settling of people in towns and villages, the changes occurring in the psychology of various social groups, and other social processes. The 23rd Congress of the C.P.S.U. noted that sociological investigations based on a materialistic understanding of history, and generalising concrete facts in the life of socialist society are playing an ever increasing role in the solution of practical, political, production and educational problems.

These investigations are a practical application of the method of historical materialism to the study of concrete social processes. Since historical materialism is a science of the human society and of the laws of its development, it sets forth general sociological theory.

Historical materialism views society as an integral struc-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 199.

ture, a system of relations binding social groups, classes and people which are the vehicles of these relations, and studies society and all its components in their historical development and in their actual contradictions.

Modern philosophical and special scientific literature published in bourgeois countries (France, in particular) has been extensively playing up the *structural analysis method* in recent years. The purpose of this method is to analyse the structures of given social phenomena, whose elements, separate facts and developments acquire meaning and significance only as aspects of a definite totality, as elements of a specific system. Needless to say, there is a rational grain in this method, and historical materialism does not deny the need to examine different social structures and their components in their connection and unity.

On the whole, however, this method as it is developed by its authors (C. Lévi-Strauss, M. Foucault and J. Lacant) cannot be regarded as a universal and genuine method of scientific analysis of social phenomena. First, it does not show historical development; secondly, it leaves the internal contradictions in social phenomena in the shadow, ignoring class struggle; thirdly, it ignores the active role played by man in history.

Such shortcomings and limitations are alien to the method of historical materialism which opens broad vistas for a scientific study of social structures, and which is based on the analysis of concrete social phenomena, occurrences and so forth. Concrete sciences (such as law, history of art, etc.) study particular aspects of social life and separate social phenomena, but they can discover the laws governing the development of these phenomena only by understanding their place in the life of society as a whole and by recognising the general laws of social development. The historian who rejects these laws will remain a collector of facts; he finds it difficult to discover the interconnections between cause and effect in history and can do nothing more than describe it. Historical materialism gives social sciences a scientific method of cognition, and the Party of the working class and the progressive forces of society a correct method of action and struggle for social progress.

5. Historical Materialism and the Struggle for Social Progress

Knowledge of the laws of social development above all makes it possible to take a correct approach to the analysis of the concrete historical situation and to predict the course of events. Thanks to scientific prognostication it is possible not to grope in the dark but to fight consciously for social progress and to chart the surest way to the attainment of this goal.

Characteristically, many modern non-Marxist sociologists who deny the possibility of knowing the laws of social development and their very existence, also deny the possibility of predicting social developments. They say that the future is irrational and cannot be known.

Their assertions that the future cannot be scientifically predicted are aimed primarily against the conclusion of Marxism that the collapse of capitalism and the triumph of communism are inevitable. More than a hundred years ago Marx advanced the thesis that capitalist society was doomed and that it would be inevitably supplanted by socialism. Today, already a third of mankind has eliminated capitalism and is building a new world, in which there will be neither exploitation nor oppression. It is not surprising that there are people who even if unable to prevent the inevitable collapse of the old society are with it heart and soul and turn their backs on the future. They console themselves and assure others that the course of events cannot be predicted, that the future cannot be cognised and that it can only be an object of faith but not of knowledge.

Yet practice shows that the future can be predicted by studying the trends in the development of the present. People who are building the future always solve problems which the present brings up before them. To disclose the contradictions of the present epoch is to indicate ways for overcoming them in the future. It goes without saying that there may be a great diversity of concrete forms for overcoming these contradictions. Many concrete phenomena, which cannot be predicted at any given time in preceding history, appear in the course of social progress, but that does not preclude the possibility for discovering the

basic trends, the direction in which society will develop in the future.

Prediction of social development is quite possible but it has its specific features distinguishing it from the prediction of natural processes. One should not imagine prognostications in the social sciences as being similar to those in astronomy, where the scientist, knowing the period of a comet's rotation, can forecast its appearance centuries ahead.

In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin said that each individual producer introduces some change into social being, however insignificant. "The sum total of these changes in all their ramifications in the capitalist world economy could not be grasped even by seventy Marxes. The most important thing is that the *laws* of these changes have been discovered, that the *objective* logic of these changes and of their historical development has in its chief and basic features been disclosed. . . ."¹

Once the logic of economic evolution and its laws have been discovered, it is possible to predict the direction of social development and its results. But that does not yet give us the possibility of forecasting all the individual facts which make up the objectively necessary chain of events.

When in 1918, the "Left" Communists objected to the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany, thereby exposing the young Soviet Republic to an attack by German imperialism, they covered up their policy with the superficial prophecy that a revolution was bound to take place in Germany "within the next few days". Lenin replied to them: "That the socialist revolution in Europe must come, and will come, is beyond doubt. . . . It would be a mistake, however, to base the tactics of the Russian socialist government on attempts to determine whether or not the European, and especially the German, socialist revolution will take place in the next six months (or some such brief period). Inasmuch as it is quite impossible to determine this, all such attempts, objectively speaking, would be nothing but a blind gamble."²

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 325.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, pp. 443-44.

In his report at the Seventh Party Congress, Lenin ironically told the "Left" Communists: "It will be a good thing if the German proletariat is able to take action. But have you measured it, have you discovered an instrument that will show that the German revolution will break out on such-and-such a day?"¹

Social science does not possess such an instrument, and can never have one. It gives us the means for predicting the main direction of social development which of necessity springs from its laws, but cannot predict all the individual events or their precise dates.

Does that mean that the concrete events and their dates are a closed book, and that we can never foreknow them under any circumstances?

No, that would be wrong altogether.

It is impossible to know the date of events when they are only just coming to a head, but once they begin to take shape, a correct analysis of the situation and the balance of class forces can help to determine their dates, sometimes with great precision. An illustration of this is Lenin's forecast of the victory of the October Revolution. Of course, no one, including Lenin, could have predicted, right after the February revolution, that the socialist revolution would take place in October. But after the July events, when Orjonikidze visited Lenin who was in hiding, he heard the leader of the revolution express confidence that the armed uprising would take place no later than September or October. When events finally brought the country to that historical dateline, Lenin, in his famous letter to the Central Committee, written on October 24, declared that the uprising should take place that day, for tomorrow it would be too late.

History is made by the millions. That is why, says Lenin, it is always much richer in content, more diverse, more comprehensive, more lively and more "cunning" than the best parties and the most conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes imagine.

The revolutionary working-class party can make a scientific analysis of social life and determine the main tendencies of its development, but the concrete development of

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 102.

events, the course of the struggle depend on the activity of millions of men, which always brings in new and creative elements.

Hence, the Marxist party, if it is to exercise genuine leadership in the struggle of the working class and the broad masses of working people, must strengthen its ties with the people, rely on their experience and make a careful study of life.

Opportunists frequently contrast experience with theory. The adherents of "inductive socialism", for example, lay special emphasis on current experience, which they declare to be something absolutely unique and quite distinct from the experience of the past or what might be in the future. Karl Renner, a leader of "Austromarxists", declared: "Experience is primary, determinative and new every day; it is something which had not existed in this form before. That is why science must always be guided by experience, correcting itself in accordance with it. No science in the world could have predicted Lenin's great experiment, any more than the experimentator himself could have predicted it. New experience, each new experiment, extends and modifies science. It would be wrong for us to base ourselves on the data obtained by science and try to determine what we would learn in the future and how we should act. That is decided only by the hour and the situation."¹

Renner reduces the correct idea that science must be guided by experience, which amends our theoretical notions, to a completely false extremity, to a negation of the science of society and the possibility of scientific prognostication. He clearly distorts history when he says that Lenin's great "experiment", as he calls the October Revolution, was not foreseen by its organiser himself. On the contrary, the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution shows that the revolutionary party, equipped with Marxism, is capable of predicting and directing the main course of events. But the whole point is that Renner tries to deny the universal significance of that experience and

¹ K. Renner, "Ist der Marxismus Ideologie oder Wissenschaft?" in *Der Kampf*, Wien, Juni, 1928, Jahrgang XXI. Heft 6, S. 252.

to undermine its international value.¹ That is why he adopts the relativist attitude that every experience is valid for the current day only. But that is a typical feature of opportunism which wholly subordinates practice to the present moment and turns its back on the future.

In contrast to opportunism, Marxism-Leninism has always insisted and continues to insist on the possibility and necessity of predicting the course of history, and of taking account of the tendencies of historical development, which is a *sine qua non* in working out a correct policy, strategy and tactics by the revolutionary party. The art of leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat rests on the Party's skill in discovering, in good time, the tendencies of social development and organising and directing the masses in accordance with them.

The Marxist prediction of the course of social development is based on the skilful application of theory to the analysis of concrete historical situations. But this calls for more than just a knowledge of the laws of social development; it is also necessary to take into account the way these laws are manifested in concrete conditions, in the highly wicker work of various factors influencing the course of events.

In each capitalist country Marxists have to take into account both the common features of capitalism, which are the same in all countries, and the specific peculiarities inherent in a given country.

In his famous work "*Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* Lenin explained that the joint internationalist tactics of the Communist Parties demands not a stereotyped approach, not disregard for national distinctions, but such an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism as will correctly modify these principles in *particulars*, correctly adapt them to national and nation-state distinctions.

Such presentation of the problem rests on the recognition that the same common laws operate in all capitalist

¹ In the article quoted above, Renner declared that there must be "as many socialisms as there are states and countries on earth" (p. 247), and in a later pamphlet, *Die Neue Welt und der Sozialismus*, he said that not only each country but each time has its own "specific Marxism". (K. Renner, *Die neue Welt und der Sozialismus*, 1945, S. 9.)

countries and that they operate in their own way in each individual country. The result of this is that "while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws, it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development".¹

The same applies to the laws of socialism. The laws of the establishment and development of socialism just as the laws of the development of capitalism are the same for all peoples. Therefore, the attempts of the revisionists to proclaim that each country could move towards socialism in accordance with its own specific laws were absolutely groundless and frequently were nothing more than an expression of their nationalistic ambitions.

Obviously, there is no denying the existence of specific features in the development of individual countries, nor ignoring the concrete historical situation in which different countries are building socialism. But these peculiarities do not preclude the fundamental laws governing the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The laws of development of socialism are objective; they cannot be established subjectively or arbitrarily, but are determined by objective conditions themselves and, therefore, are basically the same for all peoples. At the same time these laws cannot be applied in a stereotyped manner, which is typical of dogmatism. Dogmatists frequently attempt to impose on other countries the tactics which they earlier applied in their country. If, for example, a revolution in a particular country was accomplished after a prolonged period of armed struggle, the dogmatists consider that this is the only correct road for all other countries and in doing so disregard their specific features and the concrete historical situation. This approach frequently leads to nationalism, to imposing the peculiarities of their country on other parties.

Consequently, it is necessary to be able to draw a line between what is really common in the experience of a particular country and that which is specific. The possibility of other countries applying the experience of a country

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 477.

which has overtaken them in historical development is explained by the fact that general laws, which are the same in all countries that go through identical stages of development, operate in history. But this experience must always be applied creatively, with due consideration for the way general laws operate in individual countries.

In his work "*Left-Wing*" Communism—an Infantile Disorder Lenin stressed that a Communist Party "must act on scientific principles. Science demands, first, that the experience of other countries be taken into account, especially if these other countries, which are also capitalist, are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a very similar experience; second, it demands that account be taken of all the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in a given country, and also that policy should not be determined by the desires and views, by the degree of class consciousness and the militancy of one group or party alone".¹

The position of the Marxists is equally far removed from the views of dreamers divorced from life and from the stand of mere recorders of the spontaneous course of events.

The first and chief feature of the strategy and tactics of the Marxist party is that it always rests on a precise analysis of the objective conditions and is alien to any kind of subjectivism. Lenin said: "Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of all the class forces in a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements."² A strict consideration of the objective conditions and the correlation of class forces is the first requirement of realistic policy. Lenin always taught not to indulge in wishful thinking and to reckon with the actual conditions in all cases.

That was why he carried on such an insistent struggle against "Leftist" phrase-mongering, which was quite capable of ruining the revolution. The chief vice of the "Leftists" is unwillingness to reckon with the actual conditions; they refuse to take into account the objective conditions,

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 80-81.

² Ibid., p. 63.

on which the possibility of solving the various problems depends, or the level of the revolutionary spirit among the masses, taking their own revolutionary impatience for the masses' readiness to act.

The theoretical basis of the "Leftist" deviations is subjectivism, a departure from the materialist view of history, which the "Leftists" frequently replace by the idealist theory of violence. They care little whether society's economy is mature enough for this or that transformation, and imagine that the absence of economic conditions may be replaced by revolutionary fervour and will-power. Anarchists, Blanquists, for example, insisted that a well-organised minority could carry out a revolution by bold, resolute and violent action, regardless of whether or not a revolutionary situation existed in the country. Criticising these views of Bakunin, Marx wrote: "He understands absolutely nothing about the social revolution and is familiar only with political phrases about it. Its economic prerequisites do not exist for him. . . . It is *volition* and not economic conditions that form the basis of his social revolution."¹

Subjectivism inevitably leads to adventurism in politics, as Lenin showed in his criticism of the "Left" Communists in 1918 and later of the Trotskyites, etc.

The philosophical basis of "Left" revisionism is idealism, which ascribes to ideas the determining role in social development, and slides down to subjectivist positions; the philosophical basis of Right-wing opportunism is usually vulgar materialism, which recognises the determining role of economic conditions in the life of society, but denies the activity of the subjective factor and its influence on the course of social development.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism also condemned this stand most resolutely. Lenin always fought against those who vulgarised Marxist materialism and minimised the significance of progressive ideas in social development. Here is an example. In 1908 the Menshevik Cherevanin published a book entitled *The Present Situation and the Possible Future*, in which he advocated a policy of splitting hairs

¹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, S. 633.

with regard to the existing conditions and tried to nullify the role of progressive ideas. He wrote: "Of course, the boldest projects can be worked out in the belief that ideas can of themselves win over anyone for anything. But *the materialist view of social phenomena mercilessly clips the wings of such flights of fancy.*" Lenin underscored this sentence and wrote in the margin: "What a castrate!"¹

Only those ideas and policies are barren which are divorced from the life of society and which ignore the objective conditions. But if a party, which is fighting for social progress, takes into account the objective conditions and sets itself realistic tasks, it becomes a great mobilising force capable of organising the masses and playing a tremendous role in the transformation of reality.

Historical materialism does not deny the large role of the subjective factor in social development; on the contrary, it acknowledges and scientifically explains it. The role of the subjective factor naturally increases in some historical epochs, a fact which is also of exceptional importance for elaborating the correct strategy and tactics in the various periods of the struggle for social progress.

The role of the subjective factor is especially enhanced in the conditions of socialism and communism, when the spontaneous development of society gives way to a consciously directed development. It now acquires an unprecedented function in history, that of directing social development in accordance with the objective laws and the demands of social progress flowing from them, and effecting systematic changes in the conditions of men's lives and their social being.

The 23rd Congress of the C.P.S.U. underlined the need to ensure scientific management of all economic and social affairs. This can be effected provided all objective conditions as well as the laws governing social development are strictly taken into account. Such management is incompatible with any manifestations of subjectivism. Subjectivism is just as intolerable in solving the tasks of communist construction as is the let-things-ride attitude or spontaneity in the advance towards communism. "The C.P.S.U., being a party of scientific communism, proposes and ful-

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXVI*, Moscow, 1934, p. 403 (in Russian).

files the tasks of communist construction in step with the preparation and maturing of the material and spiritual prerequisites, considering that it would be wrong to jump over necessary stages of development, and that it would be equally wrong to halt at an achieved level and thus check progress," says the Programme of the C.P.S.U.¹ The C.P.S.U. regards the gradual development of socialism into communism as an objective law and shapes its policy accordingly.

Historical materialism is a scientific basis for the policies of the Marxist parties, which can, as Lenin put it, combine the greatest passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the utmost equanimity and sobriety in taking the objective situation into account. Therein lies the exceptional practical importance of historical materialism in the fight for social progress.

¹ *The Road to Communism*, p. 512.

Chapter II

THE MODE OF PRODUCTION—THE DETERMINATIVE FACTOR OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Among the laws of social development a highly important place is occupied by the law according to which the progress of society is in the final count determined by changes in, and improvement of, production. The production of material wealth necessary for the life of men—food, clothes, dwellings, etc.—is the first and the most essential condition for the existence of society. The growth and development of production are also a condition of society's progressive development. This proposition is corroborated by the entire history of the emergence and the subsequent development of human society.

1. Emergence of Human Society and Social Production

Science has incontestably proved that the human race has a natural biological origin. It appeared during the evolution of the animal world in the beginning of the Quarternary period. The biological basis of the first men was an extinct species of anthropoids, i.e., manlike apes.

At the end of the Tertiary there were several species of anthropoids, including both the forefathers of the modern man and those of the modern anthropoids (the chimpanzee, orang-utan, gorilla and gibbon). They were distinct from each other both as regards their morphological and physiological qualities and their mode of life. Among all anthropoids man's forefathers were the least specialised; they had already learned to walk upright on two feet and lived on the ground, whereas the forefathers of the modern

chimpanzee and other apes were to a large extent arboreal. Subsequently they developed long hands and short legs and became adapted to climbing. Today anthropoids (orang-utan and others) are specialised to such a degree that in accordance with the operation of the law of evolution the path to their humanisation is barred completely.¹

The development of man's forefathers became possible owing to two conditions: their gathering into more or less stable herds and the appearance of primary forms of labour. The variety of articles of consumption increased considerably thanks to labour, even if its forms were embryonic. By living in herds man's forefathers could in some measure protect themselves against the attacks of individually stronger beasts of prey and gradually turn to hunting large animals. In the process of evolution labour, as an essential means in the fight for existence and a factor subjected to natural selection, gradually turned into a factor influencing the operation of this general biological law. The struggle for existence forced the anthropoids ever more frequently to improve natural implements of labour and then begin making artificial ones. This meant that even if it was highly developed and manlike, the ape was beginning to turn into a human being. Labour "is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself".²

Genuinely human labour, Engels wrote, begins with the making of tools. Man is a being that makes tools with the help of which he labours. "No simian hand has ever fashioned even the crudest of stone knives."³

Archaeology authenticates that the hand adze was undoubtedly the first product of human labour. This stone tool had a standard form. Reproduction of this tool according to existing models meant knowing it and having experience of making it; and knowledge and production experience can be preserved and handed down from generation to generation only by a society, only by men work-

¹ See John Lewis, *Man and Evolution*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1962.

² Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 80.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

ing in groups. "The appearance of the hand adze indicated a major step not only in the development of the productive activity but also in the sphere of relations between beings producing things. The appearance of a tool with a stable, standard form was impossible in an animal herd. It could have appeared only in a group which in some measure was already adapted to the needs of productive activity, only in a primitive human herd."¹

The transition to the making of stone tools as a constant form of vital activity, the use of such a natural element as fire, and collective hunting for large animals produced far-reaching changes in the biological nature of our apelike forefathers. Anthropology concludes that morphologically and physiologically (the size of the brain, the shape of the skull, the structure of the arms and the larynx, etc.) they differed from the anthropoids. Labour decisively influenced the changes in the physical structure of the first man. The gradual perfection of the arms had a progressive effect on the whole human organism and stimulated the development of the brain.

Because the viability of a herd directly depended on how experience was handed down from one generation to another, the first men were forced to make sure that their herd was united to maximum on the basis of production interests. To ensure production unity of the herd, it was necessary to bridle zoological individualism. The transformation of a primate herd into a production community was a victory of the social over the biological.

With the rise of the tribal system production and reproduction of material wealth was concentrated within a tribe. As regards the reproduction of a particular tribe, it could take place only if there were close and even organic ties with another tribe. At first these relations were not regulated at all, but eventually definite types of marriage were evolved for the purpose of bringing them in order. Under the tribal system biological relations between sexes took the form of marriage-family relations. The human beginning was established for all times in this sphere of relations between men.

¹ Y. I. Semyonov, *The Origin of Mankind*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 185 (in Russian).

Since the time when man assumed the appearance he has today, the further development of society no longer depended on his morphological or physiological changes, but exclusively on the improvement of his implements of production. Archaeologists unanimously note that some 50,000-70,000 years ago there was a tremendous leap forward in the development of tools and economic branches due to the emergence of man with a modern physical appearance.

2. Social Production and Geographical Environment

We know from history that the production of material wealth on the whole is taking place on an extended basis despite temporary reversals. Of course, the scale, nature and rate of extended production change from generation to generation, depending on the level of the productive forces and the socio-economic system of society. Nevertheless, at all stages it is indispensable for social development to draw more and more objects and forces of the surrounding nature into the production processes. Nature is an inexhaustible storehouse of implements of labour for men. In it they find the necessary substances and power for making articles of consumption and tools. The greater natural resources are used in the production of means of subsistence, the greater becomes man's power over nature.

Inasmuch as social production is inconceivable without interaction with nature and nature itself is an objective reality existing independently of human society and must be taken into account, it is necessary to ascertain how the surrounding nature influences social production.

Geographical environment, the accepted term for the natural conditions in which society exists, includes relief, climate, water resources, soils, vegetable and animal life and mineral wealth. The territory of any country is a unique combination of these components.

The territory, inhabited by a particular people owing to historical circumstances, forms part of natural conditions in which humanity as a whole is living and, therefore, is directly dependent on these conditions. The common natural environment for the whole of humanity is the planet

Earth in its relationship with other cosmic bodies, above all, the Sun.

Yet, the concept "geographical environment" makes sense only if compared with society. Geographical environment is historical, for it is changing ever since the appearance of man, both under the impact of natural terrestrial or cosmic causes and also as a result of the transforming activity of men. The changes that have occurred in geographical environment may appear slight compared with the rate of historical development of the human society. Nevertheless, since the appearance of man it has undergone substantial changes. Geology and geography disclose that even in the period of the existence of the *Homo sapiens*, i.e., in the last 70,000-50,000 years, vast geological and geographical changes have taken place on earth.¹ In Europe, for example, men lived through the last stage of the glacial period (known as the Glaciation) which ended approximately 12,000 years ago. After the retreat of the glaciers, the European climate underwent considerable fluctuations. Science knows six post-glacial climatic periods: Arctic, sub-Arctic, Boreal (7,000-5,000 B.C.), Atlantic (5,000-3,000 B.C.), sub-Boreal (3,000-500 B.C.), and the sub-Atlantic (which began approximately 500 B.C. and is still continuing). Seashores also changed their contours in this period. For instance, only 6,000-7,000 years have elapsed since the Black Sea last joined the Mediterranean through straits.

But however great are the changes that have occurred in the geographical environment owing to natural causes, they are not comparable with the changes that were ushered in some 8,000-9,000 years ago by the appearance of cropping and livestock breeding. With the development of these branches of agriculture and of crafts man turned into an active builder of nature surrounding him. The rate at which geographical environment changed due to human activity began to increase sharply since the close of the 18th century, i.e., after the Industrial Revolution in England. Previously, owing to the relatively slow changes in the geographical environment, people of one generation

¹ See G. Tushinsky, *Space and the Rhythm of Terrestrial Nature*, Moscow, Prosveshcheniye Publishing House, 1966 (in Russian).

perceived the surrounding nature as basically invariable, but in the 19th and particularly in the 20th centuries people witnessed gigantic transformations in geographical environment which took place during their lifetime only as a result of industrial development and the employment of machines in agriculture.

It follows from the above that geographical environment today is not some sort of "pure" nature, nor the result of the operation of natural laws alone. The present geographical environment is also a result of preceding human activity, of the colossal labour effort of the earlier generations. Consequently, it is a result of the interaction of natural and social laws.

The influence of the natural environment on social production is above all the influence of those components of the geographical environment which in one or another way are included in man's production activity either as conditions of production or as an object of labour, or as a particular type of energy. But the nature of the influence of these components varies at different levels of social development.

In the primitive-communal, slave-owning or feudal systems the most important role in promoting the economic development of the country was played by those elements of the geographical environment which formed the natural basis of agriculture and the production of the means of consumption. But with the emergence of the capitalist mode of production primary importance was attached to the natural wealth of the means of labour, i.e., those elements of the geographical environment which made up the natural basis for industry, the basis of the production of the means of production. For instance, the fact that Britain, France and Germany had considerable deposits of coal at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution undoubtedly accelerated their economic development. Japan, on the other hand, had no such deposits and this, of course, impeded her economic growth when she entered the capitalist stage of development. The exceptionally great diversity of natural conditions on the territory of the U.S.A. was unquestionably conducive to its swift transformation into the world's industrially most advanced country. Needless to say, however, the leading role there was played

by the social conditions favouring the rise of capitalism, which did not have to surmount such obstacles as the feudal system and its survivals that affected the development of European countries.

At this juncture it is necessary to stress most emphatically that geographical environment promotes the economic development of a particular country not only to the extent of development of its productive forces but also to that of production relations. In 19th century Russia the diversity of geographical conditions was just as great as in the U.S.A., but owing to considerable survivals of serfdom in her economic system she lagged far behind the U.S.A. in economic growth rates. Today, Brazil's natural resources, diversity of geographical conditions and prospected mineral deposits make her one of the leading countries in this respect. Moreover, she lies at a crossing of sea routes. Yet the Brazilian people cannot fully benefit from the advantages of her geographical environment because of her backward socio-economic and political system and her economic and political dependence on U.S. imperialism.

There is a dynamic equilibrium between all the elements making up the geographical environment of a particular area. In their economic activity men adapt themselves to the established cycle of substances. Considering that the results of this activity automatically become a component of the geographical environment, the retroactive impact of this environment naturally depends on social conditions.

The possibility of a more or less harmonious development both of the economy and the geographical environment directly depends on the level of the productive forces and also on the nature of the socio-economic system. Under capitalism the domination of private ownership of the means of production inevitably leads to the spoliation of the natural resources. In their race for profits the capitalists are least of all concerned with the social consequences of their selfish intrusion into the law-governed cycle of substances in the natural environment. Violation of the law of the dynamic equilibrium of the geographical environment leads to soil erosion, floods, droughts, and so forth.

The victory of socialism radically changes society's attitude to the geographical environment, because social

welfare becomes the goal of economic activity. Socialist ownership of the means of production and the planned organisation of economic life throughout the country make it possible efficiently to use natural resources and bridle the elements. But if this possibility is to be realised an appropriate economic policy is required. In any case there are conditions for gradually diminishing and reducing to the minimum the probability of the unforeseen consequences of men's interference into natural processes that are detrimental to social production.

Today, the level of development of the world's productive forces is such that it is becoming possible to draw into production not only individual areas in some countries, but whole geographical zones on different continents; prospects are opening up for transforming not only separate areas of the land, but of the whole surface of the earth, including areas which owing to their harsh climate with difficulty yield to man's purposive influence. It has long been proved that technically it is fully possible to inundate the Sahara, drain the Amazon area and change climatic conditions in Alaska. All this is not done because of social contradictions and the policy of the monopolies in developed capitalist countries.

Since the rise of mankind, its natural environment became divided into "humanised", i.e., transformed by society in one or another degree, and "unhumanised" parts. As society developed the sphere of "humanised" nature expanded and so did man's contacts with that part of nature which was still out of reach of the production of material wealth. But despite the steadily growing power, depth and diversity of man's action on the environment, it did not transcend terrestrial conditions until the mid-20th century. The nature surrounding mankind and its geographical environments basically coincided.

But man's flight into outer space ushered in the transformation of his natural surroundings from terrestrial into interplanetary environment and the expansion of contacts with the nature of the galaxy. Systematic space exploration in the interests of all men is possible only following the victory of communism.

Thus, there is perpetual interaction between nature and society.

The geographical environment, no doubt, greatly influences social development, but it is not a force that determines it. All attempts to attribute the changes in, and the development of, society to the geographical environment are unfounded. It is the development of social production that determines the changes in the relations between society and nature.

3. Social Production and Population

Extended reproduction of the means of production and articles of consumption makes it possible to draw increasing numbers of people into production activity and at the same time requires more and more labour power. The laws governing the reproduction of labour power more than anything else depend on the level of the productive forces and the prevailing type of socio-economic system. At the same time at all phases of social development the laws governing the reproduction of manpower are influenced by the propagation of mankind as a specific biological species. Changes in the size and density of population may either promote or hinder the development of social production depending on concrete historical conditions. But whatever their nature or impact on social production, they do not determine social development, nor the replacement of socio-economic formations.

Population, i.e., the aggregate of people living on the territory of a particular country, in a part of the world and on the globe as a whole is the outcome of the interaction of the laws of propagation of the human species and those of social development. The increasing life span of men evidences man's great achievements not only in harnessing the elements, but also in controlling the elemental forces of his own biological nature.

The life span of people depends on social conditions. In the Bronze and Stone ages the average length of life did not exceed 18 years, in the Roman Empire it rose to 25 years, and in the mid-19th century it rose to 34 years. At present the average life span throughout the world is 50-60 years. At the same time the life span in developed countries is two and even more times longer than in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The propagation of animal and vegetable species is regulated by the law of natural selection. The number of individuals making up a particular species cannot transcend the bounds imposed by the conditions of the environment which determine the birth rate, fecundity, the mortality and the speed with which generations succeed each other. The propagation of the human species is a different matter. The total number of people can, in the final count, be limited only by the degree to which society controls nature, in other words, by the level of the production of material and cultural values.

In natural conditions an above-norm increase in the number of individuals making up an animal species is sooner or later compensated by a corresponding decrease, for in the geographical environment, of which the animal world is a component, everything is in dynamic equilibrium, whereas the characteristic feature of the human species is perpetual numerical growth. The temporary decrease in the population of some countries at different periods of their history was as a rule more than compensated by the increment of the population in other countries.

Initially (70,000-10,000 B.C.) the annual increment of the population was very insignificant. Even following the introduction of cropping and livestock breeding it amounted to some hundredths of one per cent. A sharp change took place following the emergence of the capitalist mode of production. In the beginning of the 17th century the average annual increment of the population was already 0.1 per cent; from 1750 to 1850 it rose to 0.5 per cent; in the period immediately after the Second World War it topped 1.5 per cent and today it is about 2 per cent.

Still more indicative are the periods during which the population of the world increased twice over. The total number of people inhabiting the earth increased more than 10-fold from the year 1000 to 1964. A period of about 700 years was required for the population to double the first time, within another 150 years it doubled again, while its present rate of increment is such that it may be expected to double again in less than 35 years.

The fact that the growth of the population directly depends on the reproduction of labour power and on the way in which it is drawn into social production discloses

that the laws of population growth are above all economic laws. Bearing in mind that social production always assumes a concrete historical form, it follows that the laws of population growth are also historical. Similar to other economic laws they change as one socio-economic formation succeeds the preceding one, and their characteristic features are determined by the nature of the prevailing relations of production.

Capitalist accumulation, for example, leads not only to the absolute growth of the aggregate labour power, but also to the constant growth of the relatively redundant labour power, i.e., to the steady increase in the number of unemployed who make up the reserve army of labour. Naturally the families of the unemployed also become part of the "surplus" population.

There is a relative overpopulation under capitalism not because the rates of population growth are allegedly faster than those of the productivity of labour thus causing a shortage of the means of subsistence. On the contrary, "surplus" labour power and consequently "surplus" mouths to feed appear when the productivity of labour and the rate of output of consumer goods, food in particular, greatly surpass the natural growth of population. Surplus population in capitalist society is exclusively the result of the fact that part of the workers are redundant in comparison with the average requirements of capital for its self-growth. Such, according to Marx, is the nature of the law of population growth peculiar to capitalism.

The law of population growth, being a specific law of every socio-economic formation, operates throughout the period of its existence. Yet the impact of this law on the most important indices of the natural population movement, namely, birth rate, mortality, life span, succession of generations and increment of population, varies in accordance with the different stages of development of a given formation. Consequently, there is a specific type of reproduction of the population at each stage in the development of any formation.

The history of capitalism, for example, knows two types of reproduction of population. The first type with a high birth rate, high mortality, rapid succession of generations and a rapid natural growth of population was typical of

the highly advanced countries during the stage of industrial capitalism. The second type with a low birth rate, low mortality, retarded succession of generations and slow growth of population is characteristic of the same countries at the stage of monopoly capitalism.

The replacement of the first type of the reproduction of population by the second type is explained by a series of factors, primarily by the considerable increase in the expenditure for the reproduction of labour power, and by the need of production in qualified workers with a sufficiently high level of culture and education to keep abreast of the rapidly changing machinery. Due to growing competition on the labour market caused by chronic unemployment many families either have no children at all or not more than one or two. The progress in public health services makes birth control possible but it cannot be regarded as the main cause of the sharp decline in the growth of population in developed capitalist countries in the contemporary epoch.

In contrast to the capitalist law of population growth the socialist law presupposes full and rational employment of all able-bodied men and women, however great the scale and rate of the development of social production may be.

The type of the reproduction of population in socialist countries is characterised by a medium birth rate, low mortality, slow succession of generations and a medium growth of the population. It takes shape under the decisive influence of the socialist law of population growth, i.e., in conditions where each working man has guaranteed work and where concern for the mother and for the upbringing of the rising generation is brought to the level of government policy. The considerable rise of the cultural standards of all sections of the population and the high level of public medical services have created favourable conditions for a transition to conscious motherhood which harmoniously combines the desire of the women to participate actively in production and public affairs with the interests of society and the state in bringing up a morally and physically healthy young generation.

The impact of the growth of population on social production depends both on the level of the productive forces and on the nature of the prevailing relations of

production. The increase of population may either stimulate the development of the productive forces or retard it, depending on concrete conditions. But it is never a factor determining the development of production and society as a whole.

In the contemporary epoch there is absolute overpopulation alongside different forms of relative overpopulation in many Asian, African and Latin American countries where the annual growth of population frequently reaches three per cent. In Latin America, for example, agricultural production in the period from 1961 to 1964 rose by less than one per cent, while the population increased by more than five per cent. Out of 200 million Latin Americans 120 million are chronically undernourished.

Modern neo-Malthusians seek to attribute the situation in these continents to the fatal influence of some sort of law of nature according to which men just like all living beings propagate faster than the growth of food resources permits. In actual fact, however, it is the imperialist powers, who by their colonial policy in the past and their neo-colonialist policy today have doomed these countries to a prolonged period of economic stagnation, that are to blame for their low living standards. Here the prevalence of the semi-feudal landed proprietorship, the primitive land-tenure methods, the insignificant share of industry in the national economy and the domination of foreign capital go hand in hand with the oppressed and uncultured peasant masses, the benighted position of the women and adherence to the tradition of having large families sanctified by religious prejudices. The high birth rate in these countries is an historical phenomenon offsetting the high mortality rate.

Modern neo-Malthusians are seriously worried about the rapid growth of the population in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But their anxiety is of a manifestly class nature. They believe that the "demographic boom" holds a latent threat to the "stability of the Western world", in other words, it threatens the existence of the capitalist system.

To avert the menace hanging over capitalism some neo-Malthusians recommend with undisguised cannibalism a nuclear war against the "inferior" peoples of the black and

yellow races. Most of them, however, believe that it is possible to stem the growth of population and thus save the capitalist world from revolutionary upheavals by widely advertising contraceptive devices or agents, introducing free abortions and other measures of demographic policy.

These prescriptions are at once utopian and reactionary. Only revolutionary socio-economic transformations, radical agrarian reforms, industrialisation and cardinal reconstruction of agriculture on the basis of the latest achievements of agronomy open up before the developing countries real prospects for doing away with absolute overpopulation.

A scientific solution of the population problem in the interests of the working people may be achieved only after the victory of socialism. Under socialism, thanks to the planned development of economy and the spread of conscious motherhood, possibilities are created to make the rates of growth of population consistent with the rates of production of material and cultural wealth: food, housing, hospitals, educational institutions. The achievement of the optimum rates of population growth, which are unattainable under capitalism owing to the domination of private ownership of the means of production and anarchy of production, become a reality in socialist conditions.

Thus, the growth of population is not a purely biological process but a social phenomenon determined by the character of the productive forces, relations of production, the social and political system, etc. Therefore it is incorrect to view it as a process which is independent of social conditions and which determines the development of production. While by no means denying the influence of the growth and density of population on the development of production, historical materialism does not consider it the decisive force of social development. On the contrary, it views it as a result of the aggregate of social conditions.

4. Productive Forces and Relations of Production

Social production is made up of the productive forces and the relations of production.

The *productive forces* are the forces with which society

acts on nature to obtain the means of subsistence and control elemental forces.

The productive forces consist of the *means of production*, primarily the instruments of labour created by society, and also the *men* who produce the material wealth.

The *means and instruments of labour*, that is, the objects or things with which man applies the energy of nature to its substance for the purpose of producing material wealth, are the decisive element of the productive forces. In contemporary conditions their structure is very complex and they consist of the working mechanism, the motor, the control and transmission mechanisms.

The bulk of the means of labour are peculiar extensions of man's organs of action, his hands; others are extensions of his organs of perception; and still others, of his brain.

The means of labour, which are the implements of action, consist of an infinite diversity of working mechanisms set in motion principally by electric, steam or internal combustion engines.

The diversity of the means of labour as instruments of perception is a long way behind that of the means of labour as implements of action. Man's organs of perception were equipped with extensions much later than his organs of action. The most important implements of perception—optical (glasses, the telescope and the microscope)—appeared only in the early 17th century. Energy was linked up with the implements of perception only recently and produced, as had to be expected, a tremendous effect. Suffice it to mention the electronic microscope and the television equipment which photographed the dark side of the Moon. The implements of perception facilitate man's study of the depths of the universe.

Extraneous devices have long been used to help the brain. Thus, the art of writing has helped to extend man's memory immensely. First primitive and then more complex computing devices were invented, the abacus, adding machines, etc. But a qualitatively new stage in the material equipment of thinking was ushered in when energy was made to operate all these devices, when electronic computers were invented.

With technical advancement an ever greater number of *actions* in human thought can be translated into *operations*

by machines. This makes it possible to relieve in increasing measure the brain of tiresome and monotonous mental work, leaving it free to solve creative problems.

In addition to the means of labour, the means of production also include the *objects of labour*, i.e., the natural objects on which the means of labour act.

Marx noted in his *Capital* that "labour is not the only source of material wealth, of use-values produced by labour. . . . Labour is its father and the earth its mother".¹ This gives rise to the question of the relationship between the elements of man's natural environment, the elements of the geographical environment and the component elements of the productive forces.

The elements of nature become elements of the productive forces only from the moment they are drawn into the process of production. Thus, in itself the power of water is a natural force and an element of the geographical environment and not of the economy. But when it falls on the blades of a turbine and rotates it, thus producing electricity, the movement of water—a natural phenomenon—acquires economic value and becomes a component of the motor, i.e., a component of such an element of the productive forces as the means of labour.

This fully applies to the transformation of the objects of nature into objects of labour. An object of labour in itself is a force of nature and remains a part of the geographical environment until labour is applied to it. Only when it is drawn into production does it become a productive force and, hence, a part of material production as a whole, a component of the social environment.

Objects of labour differ depending on the type of natural substances men use to make the means of labour (wood, stone, iron and other ores, plastics, reinforced concrete), to generate energy (wood, coal, water, petroleum, uranium ore), to manufacture articles of personal consumption (natural fibres—including cotton, silk and wool, and also nylon and other synthetic fibres). During the initial stages of social development the dominating objects of labour were those directly offered by nature; at later stages, particularly today, the prevalent objects of labour are

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1965, p. 43.

those which have been repeatedly processed. Thus, the work of the miners is preceded by that of the geologists who prospect, estimate and lay the ground for the extraction of minerals.

In general, the range of objects of labour depends on the development of the means of labour, but the part played by the former in the process of production is far from passive. The properties and qualities of the means of labour largely depend on the material of which they are made. Modern techniques call for new and better materials. The importance of raw materials increases with the development and improvement of the means of labour. New objects of labour, in their turn, require new means of labour for processing them. Today, as the chemical industry develops rapidly there is increasing production of objects of labour with pre-set properties which are not to be found in natural objects. The level and the character of the productive forces is therefore directly dependent not only on the state of the means of labour but also of the objects of labour.

The chief element of the productive forces is labour power, i.e., the men who set the means and the objects of labour in motion for the production of material wealth and who have the necessary knowledge, production experience and work habits. Consequently, the productive forces of society do not include the whole of humanity but only that part of it which is engaged in production.

Men are an element of the productive forces not only because they have hands, brains, nerves, muscles and organs of perception, but chiefly because they are capable of making the means of labour and of using them to transform the objects of labour into material wealth. This ability, i.e., knowledge, production experience and work habits, is not passed on from parent to child automatically, nor is it a result of man's biological development. It is a product of social life based on material production. It is the sum total of the physical and spiritual powers acquired by man in society which enable him to produce material wealth.

When Marxists say that men are a component element of the productive forces they mean the *aggregate labour force of society*. This must be emphasised when dealing

with modern productive forces, whether capitalist or socialist. Today, the production of any machine includes very many intermediate stages, ranging from design and laboratory tests to assembly on a conveyor. In the process of production the work of the designer, the laboratory assistant, the adjuster, the assembly man, and so forth becomes the joint labour of an aggregate worker. They all directly participate in the production process and it is impossible to manufacture goods without their labour, which is separated in space and time. This means that the share and the role of the work performed by engineers and other technical workers in the modern aggregate labour power are steadily increasing. In the present-day scientific and technical revolution, the degree of scientific knowledge and the ability to apply it directly to production are becoming more and more the basic indicator of the state of the aggregate labour power.

The structure of the productive forces is constantly developing. This is above all expressed in the differentiation and the growing intricacy of such elements of the productive forces as the means of labour, the objects of labour and labour power. Thus, for example, the fuel and power factor is acquiring great importance in the structure of the means of labour.

Major achievements in power development (the transmission of electric power over long distances, the invention of hydraulic machines and internal combustion engines) have made it possible extensively to use electricity for industrial purpose. Having become special branches, the power and fuel industries are now turning output on a large scale which is vital to modern production. Today the fuel and power resources developed by man are essential for the operation of all machines. Economists have estimated that approximately 20 per cent of the capital investments are channelled into the power industry.

With the advance of engineering and technology, science is coming to play a steadily increasing role in the development of production. Science, as a special sphere of human activity, arose out of the growing needs of production. But for hundreds and even thousands of years production was based on nothing more than experience and observation. A characteristic feature of our epoch is that

scientific progress is becoming the decisive factor of the development of the productive forces. The sphere of science, which in the past was almost completely outside the sphere of production of material wealth, has now largely entered the sphere of material production. The work of the researcher is becoming a necessary component of productive labour. Science, as Marx had foreseen, is turning into an immediate productive force. The advantages derived from the application of scientific discoveries in the form of new machinery and improved technological processes, are much greater than their cost, i.e., the expenditures incurred by society to achieve scientific results.

Science applied in production has a much greater effect on the results of labour than individual production experience and work habits. Today, a man in charge of a giant electronic computer does the work of 25,000-30,000 well-trained mathematicians. In the last 100 years, according to Academician Stanislav Strumilin, the technological application of science in ferrous metallurgy has helped to reduce the expenditure of human labour per ton of pig iron by 98 per cent and even more in the production of steel and rolled metal.

The transformation of science and scientific research into an organising factor of the development of the productive forces is inseparably bound up with the acceleration of the rates of its own advance. Professor John Bernal has estimated that in 1896 there were only about 50,000 men in the world who adhered to scientific traditions, of whom not more than 15,000 ensured the progress of knowledge by conducting direct scientific research. By the mid-1950s at least 400,000 people were already actively engaged in scientific research. Today the total number of scientific workers is approaching 2,000,000, and expenditure on science has increased 400-fold.

It has been estimated that the cost of research in industrial countries doubles every decade. This means that science is progressing much faster than any other sphere of human activity. The Soviet Union has the highest growth rate of scientific personnel. According to UNESCO figures, in the last 50 years the number of scientists in the European capitalist countries has been doubling every 15 years, in the U.S.A., every 10 years and in the U.S.S.R.,

every seven years. The U.S.S.R., whose population adds up to about seven per cent of the total population of the globe, has 25 per cent of the world's scientists.

Science is becoming an immediate productive force primarily because it is acquiring direct and decisive importance for the development of all the elements of the productive forces: the means of labour, the objects of labour and labour power. Today the means of labour are undoubtedly the direct material embodiment of scientific achievements. At the same time the level of scientific and technical training of the producers of material wealth is now a major indicator of the state of labour power.

At the same time science, especially experimental science as represented by research institutions, laboratories and various types of testing installations, is a special branch in the social division of labour.

When it is said that scientific activity has largely become part of the sphere of production it does not mean that science has been entirely swallowed by production. This will never happen. Today there are at least two distinct types of scientific institutions: first, those dealing with applied problems, and whose workers participate in productive labour as an element of the aggregate worker; second, those working on long-range problems of general theory primarily of a research character, and whose workers do not directly participate in production.

The productive forces of society are genuine productive forces only if all their elements are in unity and interact in the process of production. When the means of labour and the objects of labour, on the one hand, and men, on the other, are separated from each other, they are only potential productive forces. The way they are combined depends on the state of the relations of production.

What are *relations of production*, or, to use another term, *economic relations*?

For a long time already men have been producing material wealth in society on the basis of social division of labour. Division of labour, i.e., specialisation and co-operation of producers in the process of production precludes isolated labour activity unconnected with other men. In order to organise production in conditions of specialisation and co-operation of labour even in their most primitive

forms men have to work together and establish the necessary production ties and relations of production whose character is determined by the *forms of ownership* of the means of production.

After material wealth has been produced it is liable to distribution between the men who directly or indirectly participated in its production. Since under the division of labour men produce a particular commodity while experiencing the need in different commodities, the material wealth they produce is subject to redistribution through exchange. When the social product is distributed and then redistributed through exchange, the means of livelihood enter the sphere of consumption on which the reproduction of the aggregate labour power depends. In all these spheres definite economic relations are formed between men.

The basis of relations of production are above all *property relations*. In the sphere of direct production they are the relations between its participants, which are determined by the appropriation of the means of production and the labour force. In the sphere of distribution the *property relations* are those of the appropriation of the results of labour, or the manufactured social product. In the sphere of exchange they are relations between the participants in the division of social labour arising from the redistribution of the results of production in their concrete consumer form. Finally, in the sphere of consumption they are relations connected with the appropriation of articles of personal or social non-production consumption, i.e., with the actual realisation of the produced means of livelihood.

The basic property relation and, consequently, the principal relation of production is always relation towards the *means of production*. The relations between men who are connected with the means of production exist because the latter are always distributed in one way or another. "Production," wrote Marx, "must rest on a definite distribution of the instruments of production; in this sense distribution precedes production and forms its prerequisite."¹ The mode of distributing the means of production

¹ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858. Einleitung*, Moscow, 1939, S. 18.

is simultaneously the mode of connecting labour power with the means of production.

Property relations in all other spheres of reproduction are shaped depending on the nature of the principal relation of production during the phase of direct production, namely on the relation with regard to the means of production.

The relations of production just as productive forces are historical. In some conditions the means of production are monopolised by a more or less large group of people, a special class of proprietors, in other conditions the means of production are at the disposal of the whole of society.

Where the means of production and the social product are appropriated by a special class of proprietors and where, consequently, the direct producers are exploited, the co-operation of people in production takes on an *antagonistic* form. Relations of production bear an antagonistic character in the slave-holding, feudal and capitalist societies.

Where all the participants in production are equal with regard to the ownership of the means of production and the results of their labour, where all of them are united into a single group of producers because of their universal and equal obligation to work, there is no room for exploitation of man by man, for social antagonism. In these conditions the relations of production are direct social *relations of co-operation*.

By themselves, however, the relations of co-operation are not the same at all stages of historical development. In the primitive-communal society, for example, production was limited to cropping and cattle breeding. The basic means of production were land and animals. The commune rarely had more than 100 active able-bodied members. The division of labour within the commune was based primarily on sex and age, and the relations of production, distribution, exchange and consumption were extremely primitive. The tribal commune was dominated by the elemental forces of nature and social development.

The socialist system of economy is another thing. Here the principal branch is industry which determines the high level of industrial development of agriculture. Under socialism the main relation of production, the relation to

the means of production, takes shape on the basis of highly developed social production and ownership of the whole people. The social division of labour reaches a high degree of development. The planned management of economy rests on the knowledge of the laws of the development of production relations, distribution, exchange and consumption. The establishment of a socialist system is man's victory over the spontaneous development of his own economic relations.

The concrete historical unity of the productive forces and corresponding relations of production constitute the *mode of production* of material wealth. The mode of production is the material basis of any socio-economic formation.

5. Dialectics of Productive Forces and Relations of Production

The starting point for the development of the social material production is the development of the productive forces. They are the most mobile aspect of the mode of production of material wealth. As a rule, the productive forces, which form the content of social production, are the first to change, to be followed by the relations of production, the social form of production.

The productive forces of society increase quantitatively and improve qualitatively from generation to generation. Their development is ascent along the line of progress.

Diverse sources or causes, primarily the sources inherent in material production itself, are responsible for the progressive development of the productive forces. Since the productive forces constitute the content of the mode of production of material wealth, the primary source of their development is inherent in them and represents the interaction of the means and objects of labour and labour power.

As man changes nature he changes himself and acquires work habits, skill and knowledge. When he uses the same means of labour to work the same object of labour he gradually acquires the necessary skill and becomes capable of producing a great deal more than the novice. In the process of production, he discovers new properties of the

means and objects of labour, i.e., he augments his production knowledge, accumulates experience in handling the means of labour and improves production technology.

New work habits, experience and knowledge, accumulated by man, raise the productivity of labour and, consequently, increase the productive forces as a whole.

This growth of knowledge, experience and work habits is manifested and fixed in the form of new and more efficient implements and techniques of production. The new means and objects of labour, the new technology are mastered in their turn, and at a definite stage this mastery is once again materialised in the means of production and so on *ad inf.*

The development of technology is an historical process of the transmission of man's labour functions, both physical and mental, by technical means, the process of the realisation of these functions. The greater the development of technology, the freer man becomes from direct participation in the production of material wealth. The most important landmarks in technological development were the invention of the working machine in the 18th century, which inaugurated the mechanisation of labour, and the appearance of a controlling machine in the mid-20th century, which ushered in the era of automation of production. From manual labour to mechanical and then to automation, this is the progressive line of the development of society's productive forces.¹

But it would not be enough and simply incorrect to say that the productive forces increase only as a result of the internal dialectics of their elements and as a consequence of man's efforts to lighten his labour and save his strength. Man, after all, works to satisfy his material and cultural requirements. But appropriation stands in the way of satisfying requirements whose pattern is historical, being determined in the final count by the level of development of the productive forces. Before man can consume these values, however, and thus satisfy his requirements, he has to appropriate them, to gain possession of them. Hence, the satisfaction of requirements is mediated by the distri-

¹ See G. N. Volkov, *The Era of Robots or the Era of Man?* Moscow, 1965 (in Russian).

bution of the social product, which in turn depends on the distribution of the means of production.

Since the relations of production and, above all, relations of ownership of the means of production and the social product make people strive for a tangible benefit from production, it is natural that relations of production have an active effect on the productive forces. The greater the economic stimuli furnished by a particular system of production, economic relations, the greater this effect will be.

"The economic relations of a given society," Engels pointed out, "present themselves in the first place as *interests*."¹ This means that economic relations do not operate on their own, but through the mechanism of material interests. Interests are a concrete form of the practical operation of objective economic laws.

The economic interests in any society take shape primarily depending on the prevalent property relations. Interests differ according to what form of ownership of the means of production is dominant, whether it is public or private, and whether the direct producer is free to dispose of his labour force or whether this freedom is restricted in one way or another.

In capitalist society the economic interest of the capitalist is to derive profit by exploiting wage labour. The immediate interest of the worker is to sell his labour to the capitalist on the labour market in conformity with its market price.

As the capitalists drive for profits their interests clash. Each tries to seize as much as possible from the aggregate surplus value created by the working class. The interests of the capitalist are dominant in this society. To be able to stand up to competition and not to give in to the organised resistance of the workers, the capitalists are forced to promote technology.

This mechanism of acting on the productive forces, which is characteristic of the capitalist relations of production, naturally greatly harms society. The anarchy of private interests is, after all, not only a creative but a destructive force. Private interests not only stimulate the

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 621.

growth of the productive forces but also hinder their development. The disunity and antagonism of interests engendered by private capitalist property leads to unemployment and poverty, i.e., to the despoliation of the principal productive force—the labour power of the working people—and also to periodic economic upheavals caused by overproduction crises, when colossal production capacities are not utilised, and the idle machinery goes to ruin.

In socialist society there is no anarchy of private interests, nor are there any social groups with opposing economic interests. Social property breeds universal interest in the production of the maximum amount and maximum diversity of material wealth consistent with the existing level of the productive forces. *The purpose of socialist production is to satisfy the constantly growing requirements of society and all its members.*

Under socialism the interests of all people are genuinely universal interests which combine the interests of the individual, the collective and society as a whole. Private interest is actually the interest of a person participating in production in appropriating a share of the social product, which enters the sphere of consumption, proportionate to the quantity and quality of his labour. Similarly, collective interest is the interest of a group of workers in appropriating part of the social product, proportionate to the results of their work.

Under socialism there may be differences and contradictions between personal, collective and social interests, but they do not develop into antagonisms. Public ownership of the means of production unites the basic interests of the people and at the same time demands conscious, planned regulation of the economy and, consequently, the establishment of reasonable proportions both in production and in the distribution and consumption of material wealth. All this cannot be achieved without eliminating the contradictions which arise in the system of economic interests.

The degree of combination—divergence or coincidence—of personal, collective and social interests directly depends on the level of economic management. The growth of socialist production demands the optimum combination of these interests.

Experience shows that socialist relations of production

with their mechanism of harmonious combination of personal, collective and social interests are more efficient than those under capitalism, characterised by the anarchy of private interests and the antagonism of class interests. Proof of this is the even and immeasurably faster rate of development of the productive forces in socialist countries than in the most advanced capitalist countries. A comparison of the annual rates of increment of industrial production over a long period in the socialist world with those in the capitalist world will reveal that they are three times higher than in the latter. It is thanks to its advantages that socialism can and will get the better of capitalism in all spheres.

This shows how enormously the relations of production influence the development of the productive forces. But however powerful this influence may be, the relations of production are always determined by the level of development and the nature of the productive forces.

In his well-known Preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*, Marx says: "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces."¹

That is Marx's formulation of *the law of correspondence of the relations of production to the character and level of development of the productive forces*. This law implies that men cannot select their relations of production at will. They are always forced to establish economic relations between themselves which correspond to the character, level and state of the productive forces. The development of the productive forces necessarily leads to changes in the relations of production, which in their aggregate constitute the economic system of a given society; with the change of economic system, there is a change or total elimination of the prevailing ideas and their corresponding institutions.

In this context, let us look at the leap from manufactory to industrial capitalism, which took place in Britain in the last thirty years of the 18th century, and subsequently

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, pp. 362-63.

in a number of other countries of Europe and America in the first half of the 19th century. The material basis for the leap was the revolution in the productive forces caused by the invention of the working machine and the steam engine. The social motive force of the leap was the bourgeoisie which in a revolutionary manner had cleared the way for the untrammelled development of capitalism in Britain and France.

The revolution in the productive forces due to the transition from the manufactory to machine production and the consequent revolution in the relations of production are bracketed under the term of industrial revolution.

This shows that *the development of the relations of production is determined by the changes in the productive forces*. But the relations of production are relatively independent and this has a reciprocal effect on the development of the productive forces themselves.

The productive forces are the content of social production and the relations of production, its form. The form may or may not correspond to the content.

The correspondence of the relations of production to the productive forces is expressed in the fact that the incentives to the productive forces developing within the relations of production are in the main in line with the character and level of development of the productive forces. When they correspond to each other, the relations of production are a powerful accelerator of the growth of the productive forces.

The discrepancy of the two means that at a given level the productive forces require new economic incentives, as the old ones tend to slow down the pace of their development. In that case, the relations of production operate as a brake on the productive forces.

It has to be borne in mind that correspondence between the relations of production and the productive forces is always relative; hence there is a certain contradiction between them. This contradiction exists in all socio-economic formations, including socialism. The emergence of contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces is an inevitable phenomenon; it does not depend on the will and consciousness of men, their desires, etc.

But the contradictions arising between the relations of production and the productive forces under socialism, if the policies of the Communist Party and the socialist state are correct, do not develop into conflict.

In all antagonistic formations, however, particularly under capitalism, the aggravation of such contradictions inevitably grows into conflict, however skilful the policy of the ruling class may be. This is due to the fact that the ruling classes, in this case the bourgeoisie, being concerned with preserving and perpetuating the relations of production based on exploitation, safeguard these relations with all the means at their disposal, and above all with the aid of the state. When the aggravation of the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production cannot be resolved on the basis of the existing economic system, the conflict between them inexorably leads to social revolution.

6. The Laws Governing the Transition from the Old to the New Mode of Production

The history of human society shows that the new mode of production does not arise overnight, in a ready-made form, but usually originates as an economic structure in the bosom of the old socio-economic formation. Thus, new productive forces and the new master-slave relations corresponding to these forces began to take shape already in the depth of the primitive-communal society, at a specific stage of its development. The feudal and capitalist modes of production originated in a similar manner.

Experience shows that the transition from the old mode of production to the new one is not determined by the free choice of men, nor by their desires but by the laws of economic development which are independent of their consciousness or volition.

In a letter to Annenkov (1846) Marx wrote: "Men are not free to choose *their productive forces*—which are the basis of all their history—for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity. The productive forces are therefore the result of practical human energy; but this energy is itself conditioned by the circum-

stances in which men find themselves, by the productive forces already acquired, by the social form which exists before they do, which they do not create, which is the product of the preceding generation."¹ Each new generation entering upon the scene must initially accept the already existing productive forces and relations of production, adapt itself to them and master them in order to obtain the possibility of producing material wealth. This determines the continuity in the development of productive forces.

But with time the relations of production cease to correspond to the character of the productive forces and when this happens it is they that have to be brought into conformity with the character and the level of development of the productive forces and not vice versa. Men never give up the productive forces they have acquired and created, which, however, does not mean, as Marx noted in a letter to Annenkov, that they will not give up the social form in which they have acquired them. "On the contrary," he wrote, "in order that they may not be deprived of the result attained and forfeit the fruits of civilisation, they are obliged, from the moment when their mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms."²

The basic changes in the relations of production signifying the replacement of one type of relations of production by another, the transition from one formation to another, higher formation, take place through social revolution.

But that does not rule out changes of a non-fundamental character which may take place within the framework of a given formation. The existing relations of production can be adapted to some extent to the development of the productive forces, but the possibility of such adaptation is not unlimited. Thus, feudal relations of production developed over many centuries; their qualitative changes were expressed in the successive replacement of one form of feudal rent by another: labour service, rent in kind and rent in cash. There were no other forms of feudal

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 35.

² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

rent, because the productive forces, in their development, finally demanded not just a new form of feudal rent but a fundamental change in the relations of production, a new type of relations of production, namely, capitalist relations.

The same applies to the capitalist relations of production. State-monopoly capitalism is the final form of their adaptation to the new productive forces. There are no intermediate stages between state-monopoly capitalism and socialism.

The important thing to note is that the new relations of production never become dominant until the old relations of production outlive themselves. They cannot become dominant until the new productive forces mature in the bosom of the old society. "No social order," wrote Marx in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, "ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself."¹

The transition from the old mode of production to the new one does not proceed in the same way each time one formation replaces another. Thus, the emergence of the socialist mode of production substantially differs from the emergence of the capitalist mode of production.

The main difference is that the socialist structure of economy does not originate in the bosom of capitalism, whereas the capitalist structure of economy does originate in the womb of feudalism. Only the material and technical conditions for the socialist mode of production, i.e., productive forces of a social character, originate within capitalism. As for the socialist relations of production corresponding to these productive forces, they do not, nor can they take shape, in the depths of capitalism.

This is explained by the fact that when feudalism is replaced by capitalism, the relations of production preserve their proprietary nature; only the type of private property changes. In view of this, proprietors, known as capitalists, become an economically powerful class already in the

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 363.

feudal formation, while it is still in the process of development. They overthrow the landowner class and establish the political rule of the bourgeoisie through a political revolution. As a result of the victory of the bourgeois revolution the capitalist system of economy becomes the dominant mode of production.

The matter is quite different when socialism supplants capitalism.

The working class is the vehicle of socialist ownership of the means of production, but it cannot create any socialist property under capitalism despite the efforts of the reformists to prove the opposite. The transition of the economy to socialist rails begins only following the overthrow of the political rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Capitalism and socialism are separated by a more or less prolonged transition period in the course of which the former is transformed into the latter through revolution. This is the period of the consolidation of socialist property and the formation of socialist economy. Needless to say, the ways for solving common tasks in the transition period may differ depending on the prevailing conditions.

A characteristic feature of the world revolutionary process in modern conditions is the approximation of the tasks of the democratic and socialist revolution. The victory of the masses at the democratic—anti-monopolist and anti-feudal—stage of the popular revolution can result in the establishment of such rule which will consistently carry out anti-monopoly and anti-feudal social and economic transformations in industry and agriculture and at the same time put through certain anti-capitalist, socialist changes. This was exactly what took place in the countries of Central and South-East Europe at the close of the Second World War and in the first post-war years. In most of these countries the people's democracy in the period of its consolidation was a revolutionary power of anti-fascist, anti-imperialist forces resting on the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry headed by the working class. Under such rule, the democratic—anti-monopoly and anti-feudal—transformations merged and interlocked with, and developed into, socialist changes. The democratic nationalisation of enterprises, previously owned by German

monopolists and the big local bourgeoisie who had collaborated with the nazis, gradually turned into the socialist nationalisation of large-scale industry, the banking system, transport and wholesale trade. The enforcement of the agrarian reform enabled the peasants to launch a mass movement for the organisation of agricultural producer co-operatives. The rehabilitation of the national economy under the leadership of the people's democratic state laid the ground for socialist industrialisation. In this way the socialist structure of economy began to take shape in these countries when they were still passing through the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal phase of the people's democratic revolution. This circumstance, of course, accelerated the construction of socialism following the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Socialism is built by the conscious effort of millions of working people. But this does not mean that the economic development of socialist society is determined by the consciousness of the people and has ceased to be an objective process. Conscious economic management does not in the least make men independent of objective conditions in which they live and act. Here, too, they cannot choose their productive forces at will, but have to proceed from the existing level of the latter's development.

As men consciously develop socialist production, they can and actually do set themselves only such goals and tasks for whose achievement real possibilities exist. Under socialism men cannot determine the pace and the direction of production at will, nor to leap over the stages that have to be passed. The spontaneous development of the productive forces and the relations of production is gradually overcome, but this development continues to depend on material conditions.

Experience shows that disregard for the objective laws of socialist and communist construction may lead to deplorable consequences. For instance, the policy of the "big leap" proclaimed by Mao Tse-tung's group at the close of the 1950s dealt a serious blow to China's economy. Attempts to by-pass the essential phases of social development, and subjectivism in guiding economic processes can only harm socialist society.

To build socialism and communism it is necessary to

take into account the objective economic laws and to apply them in economic management. Today the Soviet Union is working to ensure the fullest use of the opportunities inherent in a developed socialist society, to heighten the efficiency of social production and thus accelerate the building of communism. The building of communism requires the concentration of the utmost effort to develop the productive forces and the all-round utilisation and consolidation of socialist relations of production. Only by creating the material and technical basis of communism will socialism develop into communism.

Chapter III

THE THEORY OF CLASSES AND CLASS STRUGGLE AND ITS CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

The knowledge of the theory of classes and class struggle makes it possible to obtain a scientific understanding of the history of nations and to discover the latent springs giving rise to the major events in the antagonistic class societies. There is no getting one's bearings in these events without taking into account their social, class content and without approaching them from class positions. "People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."¹

A scientific understanding of classes affords the possibility of making a searching analysis of the actual relations of people in society, defining the place of each class in social life, its essence, actual goals and interests. In contemporary conditions the teaching of classes and class struggle is a reliable landmark helping to frame the strategy and tactics of the working-class struggle against capitalism, and a sure compass for the Marxist-Leninist parties in their fight for the revolutionary remaking of society.

1. The Essence of the Class Division of Society. The Place and Role of the Class Struggle in the Historical Process

Marx and Engels discovered the causes and essence of the class division of society, made a profound analysis of

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 28.

capitalist society's class structure and on that basis drew revolutionary conclusions. That society was divided into classes was known before Marx and Engels, but they were the first to create a *scientific* theory of classes. In a letter to Weydemeyer on March 5, 1852, Marx formulated the key propositions of this theory. He wrote: "What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production*, (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes and to a classless society*."¹

The division of society into classes is not eternal. It occurs when one section of society concentrates in its hands the basic means of production, and the other is deprived of them. The origin of classes is connected with a phase in the development of social production when private property appeared, the primitive-communal system began to disintegrate and the slave-owning mode of production took root.

In his book *Anti-Dühring* Engels showed that the formation of classes proceeded as a twofold process. On the one hand, there was the gradual formation of the class of slave-owners from among the tribal nobility and propertied members of the community who concentrated the wealth in their hands, seized prisoners of war, turned elective offices into hereditary and began to occupy dominating positions in society. On the other hand, there was the formation of the class of slaves from among the prisoners of war and the non-propertied, whose labour produced a surplus product.

Needless to say, the transformation of free people into slaves could not have taken place without violence. But this does not mean that the causes of the origin of classes are to be found in direct political coercion, as Dühring had asserted. The origin of private property and classes cannot be viewed as a result of plunder and violence. Tribes subjugated and plundered each other even before the rise of private property, but this did not lead to the emergence

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, 1965, p. 69.

of slavery because there were no economic conditions for the exploitation of man by man. Slavery was economically senseless as long as labour productivity was so low that no surplus product was produced in the process of labour. Moreover, coercion could supplant one owner for another, but it could not, of course, create private property as such. Marxism in general rejects the attempt to present coercion as the primary cause of historical development, as a force which is independent of economic conditions.

The objective social and economic conditions for the origin of classes among all peoples were the development of the productive forces and the emergence of the surplus product, the social division of labour, the beginning of exchange and commodity production and the rise of private property and material inequality. But the formation of classes among various peoples took on diverse concrete forms and occurred at different times. Archaeology, ethnography and other social sciences have established that classes first appeared in Egypt and Mesopotamia (late 4th-early 3rd millennium B.C.). In India and China the emergence of classes dates to the mid 3rd or the mid 2nd millennium B.C. In Greece and Rome classes originated in the 8th-6th centuries B.C.

The class structure of society changed as the modes of production changed. Some classes left the social stage, others ascended it. Following the classes of slave-owners and slaves there appeared the feudal lords and serfs, and then the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The emergence of new classes was always the result of new socio-economic relations.

What then are social classes? Developing the Marxist theory of classes, Lenin gave a complete and comprehensive definition of classes. He wrote: "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of

another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.”¹

This definition singles out four main features characteristic of classes:

(1) The place of classes in a definite historical system of social production.

(2) The relation of classes to the means of production.

(3) The role of classes in the social organisation of labour.

(4) The mode of acquiring and the size of the share of the social wealth, which classes possess.

The first feature indicates above all the relation of classes to definite historical systems of social production: each class is engendered by a definite mode of production. Within this mode of production, where the relations of production are based on domination and subjugation, the principal classes are antipodal.

This difference in place within the system of social production is determined by the different relation of classes to the means of production. In all antagonistic socio-economic formations, some classes own the means of production and operate as exploiters, others are fully or partially deprived of the means of production and are therefore exploited. Monopolisation of the means of production in these formations allows the dominant classes to appropriate the labour of the oppressed classes. This difference in relation of classes to the means of production is by and large fixed juridically. For example, private property of the exploiters is given every kind of protection and is justified by their political power, the state and law. Bourgeois constitutions proclaim private property “sacred and inviolable”, thereby legalising the unrestrained plunder of the working people.

The relation of classes to the means of production is their main feature and one that determines their role in the social organisation of labour. Marx said in his time that the capitalist is not a capitalist because he manages industrial production but, on the contrary, he manages industry because he is a capitalist. In all antagonistic socio-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

economic formations the exploiter classes possessing the means of production also monopolise the means of spiritual development, management of production and state affairs. The working people, deprived as they are of the means of production, are barred from guiding production and society. In the contemporary epoch, the monopoly bourgeoisie still controls production, but at the same time it is becoming more and more of a parasitical class and is drawing away from the direct management of production. Plants and mills are run by hired executives, engineers and technicians, while the monopolists lead a parasitical life, consuming, with their dependents, a huge part of the national income created by the labour of the workers and peasants. The increasing stagnation and growth of parasitism among the monopoly bourgeoisie show that it is no longer necessary to the production process. The experience of the socialist countries proves that the working people can successfully organise and run production themselves, and that is what they are doing.

The mode of acquiring and the size of the share of the social wealth of the different classes are also determined by their relation to the means of production. In antagonistic class formations, they depend on the forms of exploitation. The slave-owners obtained the surplus product from their slaves through undisguised coercion; the feudal lords also received profits through non-economic coercion but in various forms of feudal rent ranging from *corvée* to *métayage* and quit-rent. The capitalists are amassing profits whose source is the disguised unpaid labour of the worker, i.e., surplus value.

A study of these features leads one to the conclusion that in an antagonistic society one class appropriates the labour of another. That is the source of class antagonism, and it is this that makes the interests of antagonistic classes objectively irreconcilable. Therefore the class struggle in antagonistic formations is not a passing phase, a chance phenomenon, but a necessary and inevitable law of development.

The class structure of society is usually more or less intricate. In each formation alongside the dominating relations of production there may exist survivals of the old and elements of the new relations of production. This in-

terweaving of various relations of production is reflected in the class structure of society.

Major classes are those whose existence is determined directly by the prevailing mode of production in a given society. In each antagonistic mode of production there are usually two major classes. Thus, under the slave-owning system, they are slave-owners and slaves; under feudalism, they are the feudal lords and the serfs, in capitalist society, they are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. *Minor classes* are connected with more or less considerable survivals of the old or the emergence of the sprouts of the new mode of production. In the late feudal period, for example, the bourgeois and the proletarians appear, who, after the victory of the capitalist mode of production, turn from the minor to major classes. In present-day capitalist countries where there are considerable survivals of feudal relations, the landowners remain a minor class. The petty and the middle peasantry, which in many developed capitalist countries makes up a considerable portion and in the less developed countries even the bulk of the population, passes on from the feudal into capitalist society.

Besides the major and minor classes there may be various social strata. The most important of them in modern society is the *intelligentsia*. It is not a special class, for it is socially extremely heterogeneous and has no special place in the system of social production or an independent relation to the means of production. The intelligentsia is a stratum consisting of men engaged in professional brain work, whose ranks are swelled by people from different classes and which serves the interests of various classes. There was an embryonic intelligentsia in slave-owning and feudal societies, but it became a special social stratum only under capitalism.

In the slave-owning and especially in the feudal socioeconomic formations, society was divided into *estates*. This division was based on the economic, class position, but this was supplemented with a special juridical status in the state for each estate. Their different economic and juridical status was fixed by juridical acts. Transition from one estate to another was usually barred, so that exclusiveness was the characteristic feature of the estates. Capitalism, as a rule, erases the estate division of society, but in some

countries its survivals still exist. The most exclusive and closed groups in some societies were *castes* (from the Latin word *castus*, chaste, closed), which were fixed by religion, such as the caste of priests in most slave-owning states, who were keepers of the secrets withheld from other groups of men and who enjoyed all the juridical privileges. With the development of society, castes, as groups of men bound together by the unity of hereditary occupations, lose their importance. Castes, as survivals of former formations, continue to exist only in some Eastern countries, India, for example.

Under capitalism the class division of society is simplified and revealed to the full. But this is not in the interests of the ideologists of the ruling classes. They are striving to present a false picture of the diverse social classes, to veil the opposite class interests and cover up the exploiting nature of the ruling classes.

Many modern bourgeois sociologists, in effect, altogether deny the existence of classes and regard society as an aggregate of innumerable groups or strata; others, on the contrary, are trying to prove that society will always be divided into classes, and say that classes are eternal and invariable for the whole of human history.

The former chiefly take the subjectivist view of the criteria of social division. Many sociologists substitute for the concept of "class" the indefinite and hazy concept of "group", into which they include the most diverse associations of men, e.g., cultural, political, ethnic, racial, criminal, religious, family, etc.

The French sociologist Georges Gurvitch writes: "Social classes are particular *de facto* groups characterised by their supra-functionality, their tendency towards an extended structuration, their resistance to penetration by global society and radical incompatibility with other classes."¹

This definition touches upon only a few external factors and gives no hint of the material basis determining the essence of class division: the strivings of the classes are promoted to first place but nothing is said of their causes.

The American sociologists Leonard Broom and Philip

¹ G. Gurvitch, *Le concept des classes sociales*, Paris, 1954, p. 116.

Selznick, the authors of a textbook, *Sociology*, define "group" as "any collection of persons"¹ and propose that above all groups should be classified according to education grade. Here, too, however, there is the question: what determines the differences in the level of education of the members of various groups? Is it not due to their different status in society which the authors do not take into account?

The principal error of such definitions is that they rest on nothing but secondary, derivative factors and ignore the radical material causes of society's division into classes.

Since the war, Western sociology has widely accepted the theory of "social stratification", "strata" being a geological term denoting layers of the earth's crust. Social strata, some sociologists declare, are groups of men possessing specific characteristics. There are sociologists who base their stratification on occupation (George Cole of Britain), others, on living conditions, including the type of dwelling, etc. (Raymond Mack and Norman S. Hayner of the U.S.A.). Still others determine strata by a number of features. Thus, sometimes the "complex of factors" or "status" which determines to which strata men belong includes occupation, source of income, place of residence, etc. (W. Lloyd Warner of the U.S.A., Anthony Birch and Patrick Campbell of Britain). At the same time the *effects* of the class division of society (such as different housing conditions, residential districts, etc.) are often presented as the *causes* of social stratification.

There are many sociologists who view classes as a result of the different psychologies of men, their abilities, etc. The American sociologist Richard Centers believes that class is a "psychological phenomenon", that it is a man's feeling of "belongingness to something; an identification with something larger than himself". From this standpoint, classes are psycho-social groupings, something entirely subjective, based on class consciousness, i.e., a sense of "group belongingness".

In actual fact, however, a distinct class consciousness may not exist, but the class, nevertheless, exists. It is

¹ L. Broom, Ph. Selznick, *Sociology*, New York, 1963, p. 31.

known, for example, that during its rise the working class does not immediately become conscious of its position in capitalist society. This proves that class should be regarded as an objective phenomenon and its existence cannot be made dependent on its class consciousness.

It is not enough simply to recognise the objectivity of the existence of classes. It is necessary to reveal the profound economic factors forming the basis of their existence, and to do this, as we have seen, the class division of society should be explained by the mode of production.

Modern sociological literature, particularly reformist and revisionist writings, often plays up the "distributive" theory, which bases the division of people into classes not on the mode of production, but on the mode of distribution, promoting to first place such a criterion as the mode of acquiring incomes and their size. At the same time the actual sources of the income of capitalists—ownership of the means of production and exploitation of the workers—is concealed. The attempts to present the source or the size of income as the basis of the class division of society were criticised by Marx in the last, unfinished chapter of Volume III of *Capital*. Developing and continuing Marx's teaching on this question Lenin wrote: "To look for the fundamental distinguishing feature of the various classes of society in their sources of income is to give precedence to relations of distribution, which in reality are only a consequence of relations of production."¹

The advocates of the "distributive" theories (Bernard Herber, George Cole, André Philip) claim that modern capitalism is becoming a people's capitalism, that the inequality in the distribution of income is levelling out and social contrasts are disappearing. As proof, they cite the purchase of shares by some workers, drawing the incorrect conclusion that these workers become the co-owners of the enterprises. On the other hand, they assert that the capitalists are allegedly gradually becoming ordinary employees controlled by the state.

But a scientific analysis of the social reality of the capitalist countries shows that the basis of production there remains the private ownership of the means of production—

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 264.

and nothing changes even when some small shares pass into the hands of working people. In this manner the capitalists merely mobilise additional capital, turning to their advantage even the savings of the working people, while control of all the shares remains in the hands of those who own control packets.

A correct definition of classes has tremendous significance, for it allows to draw important practical revolutionary conclusions. Indeed, if the relation of men to the means of production is the main feature of class it follows that the necessary condition for transition to socialism is the replacement of big private ownership of the means of production by social property. Only through fundamental transformations in economic and political life is it possible to eliminate exploiting classes and the exploitation of man by man once and for all.

In his lecture, "The Notion of Class and the Historical Role of the Working Class", Maurice Thorez made the following correct observation: "To avoid adventurism it is essential to promote to first place that which is really important, namely, the struggle between the owners of the means of production and the proletarians, the people of wage labour, who have nothing but their labour power. That is the basic view of Marxists in examining all social phenomena."¹

A scientific understanding of the essence of classes gives rise to the acknowledgement of the inevitability of class struggle. If classes are antipodal in the mode of production and their interests are incompatible, it means that class struggle is an historical inevitability and not the product of someone's ill will.

Ever since society split up into classes, as can be seen from history, the exploiters and the exploited have been waging a continuous class struggle, either open or secret, peaceable or armed. It embraces all spheres of social life: economic, political and ideological. In antagonistic socio-economic formations, *the class struggle is a motive force of social development*. The revolutionary struggle of the classes carries society forward, brushes away what is

¹ Maurice Thorez, "Notion de classe et rôle historique de la classe ouvrière", *l'Humanité*, 14 mars, 1963, p. 7.

old, the obsolescent, and helps to assert what is new and developing; it is the actual motor of history.

The succession of socio-economic formations expressing the onward movement of society is the result of the conflict between the grown productive forces and the old, backward relations of production. In societies divided into antagonistic classes, this conflict finds expression in the aggravation of the class struggle, and is resolved through social revolution which is the highest form of class struggle. In this way, the transition from one formation to another in antagonistic society is effected through class struggle.

Generalising the diverse facts of social life, Marx and Engels arrived at the conclusion that the history of all antagonistic societies has been a history of class struggle. "The very moment civilisation begins," Marx wrote in 1847, "production begins to be founded on the antagonism of orders, estates, classes, and finally on the antagonism of accumulated labour and actual labour. No antagonism, no progress. This is the law that civilisation has followed up to our days. Till now the productive forces have been developed by virtue of this system of class antagonisms."¹

2. Classes and Class Struggle in Developed Capitalist Countries

To be able successfully to apply the Marxist theory of classes and class struggle to contemporary conditions, it is necessary above all to take into account that different countries have different levels of development, and that their class structure cannot be the same. The major and the minor classes are also different, and so are their numerical composition and their role and status in society.

What is the class structure of the developed capitalist countries?

Let us start with a description of *the working class, i.e., the class which is deprived of the means of production and is forced to live by selling its labour power to the owners of capital, and therefore subjected to exploitation within the system of capitalist production.*

¹ Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Moscow, p. 61.

In contrast to earlier exploited classes—the slaves and the serfs—the working class is connected with the developed form of economy, large-scale machine production. Being deprived of the means of production, it is not interested in the preservation of private property. It is the most advanced and resolute fighter against exploitation, and becomes the chief motive force of revolutionary transformation. By the very conditions of its labour, the proletariat becomes accustomed to unity, organisation and discipline. Lenin wrote: “Only the proletariat—by virtue of the economic role it plays in large-scale production—is capable of being the leader of *all* the working and exploited people.”¹

As a result of the development of the productive forces and rapid technological progress, considerable structural changes have taken place in the working class.

With the growth of the social division of labour, production tends to involve ever greater number of workers of diverse skills performing not only manual but also mental labour. At the same time the sphere of capitalist exploitation is expanding and ever new strata of the population are being pushed into the ranks of the proletariat. The contemporary working class in developed capitalist countries consists of three basic contingents: industrial, agricultural and commercial.

1. *The industrial proletariat* includes wage-workers in the manufacturing and extractive industries, building, transport, communications and the municipal economy. The leading role played by this working-class contingent with regard to other proletarians is determined by the fact that it is connected with *large-scale production* and is the principal producer of material wealth and the creator of surplus value. It differs from other contingents of the working class for its greater organisation, unity, a high class consciousness and experience in the class struggle; accordingly it is the *nucleus of the working class*. It is in the vanguard of the general struggle of the proletariat and all working people. That is why the industrial proletariat is the chief mainstay of the Marxist-Leninist parties.

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 403-04.

2. *The agricultural proletariat* includes the workers in agricultural production and forestry. It is the principal bulwark of the proletarian movement in the countryside. Due to its labour conditions it is more scattered and less organised than the industrial proletariat. In connection with technological progress and the general decrease of the rural population, the agricultural proletariat is diminishing numerically in the developed capitalist countries.

3. *The commercial proletariat* consists of workers in commerce, rank-and-file wage-workers in the services industry who take part in marketing the surplus value and are exploited by capital. The commercial proletariat comprises the least politically conscious sections of the workers. As compared with the industrial proletariat, it embraces more workers who have not yet become aware of their class interests and remain under the influence of bourgeois ideology.

Contrary to the allegations of bourgeois sociologists, reformists and revisionists to the effect that the proletariat is numerically decreasing in the developed capitalist countries and is dissolving in other social strata, in all countries without exception the number of factory workers is growing, and, as we shall show below, many categories of office workers have drawn closer to them as regards their social position. This fully bears out Marx's proposition that the accumulation of capital is at the same time a growth of the proletariat. In the mid-19th century, Britain, France, Germany and the United States had about 9-10 million proletarians; by the early 1960s, the number of factory and office workers in the developed capitalist countries reached 200 million of whom almost 85 million were employed in industry.

But the strength of the proletariat does not lie in its numbers alone. Lenin exposed the opportunists of the Second International who ignored the actual relationship of class forces and engaged in calculating the numerical strength of the proletariat, asserting that it could win power only when it constituted at least 51 per cent of the population of a country. Replying to the question, what does the strength of the class performing a social revolution depend on, Lenin said it depended on "1) numbers; 2) role in the country's economy; 3) ties with the mass of

working people; 4) organisation".¹ He also wrote: "The strength of the proletariat in any capitalist country is far greater than the proportion it represents of the total population. That is because the proletariat economically dominates the centre and nerve of the entire economic system of capitalism, and also because the proletariat expresses economically and politically the real interests of the overwhelming majority of the working people under capitalism."² All these factors, on which the strength of the proletariat depends and which determine its role in the present-day revolutionary processes, have been greatly enhanced over the last few decades in all the capitalist countries.

In capitalist society the proletariat is opposed by the *bourgeoisie* which owns the basic means of production and exists by exploiting the wage labour of workers.

"By *bourgeoisie*," Marx and Engels wrote, "*is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour.*"³

The bourgeoisie took shape in the depths of feudal society, springing from the ranks of the rich guildsmen, burghers, rural rich and traders. Having played a progressive role in social development in its day, the bourgeoisie turned into a reactionary class and the main drag on social progress as capitalism developed and especially after it entered the stage of imperialism.

The bourgeoisie has never been uniform in status and role in society. In contemporary conditions, the bourgeoisie is divided into monopoly bourgeoisie, the big non-monopoly and middle bourgeoisie; and in spheres of investment it falls into such groups as commercial, industrial, agricultural and banking. At the early stages of capitalist development the decisive role was played by the banking and commercial bourgeoisie; in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, the dominant role went to the industrial bourgeoisie, while in the epoch of imperialism, the leading role belongs to *monopoly bourgeoisie*. The latter concentrates in its hands the bulk of social production. In the United

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XI*, Moscow, p. 391 (in Russian).

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 274.

³ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 34.

States, for instance, a handful of multimillionaires and millionaires, who own the largest concerns and trusts, the financial magnates, the top managers, the senior government officials and the top brass have the uncontrolled use of the country's wealth and amass fabulous fortunes. To promote their selfish aims, they conduct an aggressive foreign policy and intensify the oppression and plunder of broad sections of the population. It is the monopoly bourgeoisie that is the bulwark of modern colonialism and all other reactionary forces, and the suppressor of democracy. It is the force that is behind the arms drive. Its interests have grown to be antipodal to those of the whole nation.

The non-monopoly bourgeoisie continues to be an exploiter, deriving profit from the labour of the workers, but in modern conditions it is itself hemmed in by the monopolies. Its interests do not always coincide with those of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Scientists in some countries have estimated that the bourgeoisie in the highly developed capitalist countries account for 2-4 per cent of the gainfully employed population (5 per cent in the United States, 3.3 per cent in West Germany, 1-2 per cent in Britain and 2-4 per cent in France).

With the development of capitalism, the bourgeoisie considerably increases its wealth, but at the same time the mechanism of the very process of capitalist production trains, unites and organises the proletariat.

Besides the major classes, in the developed capitalist countries there is the minor class consisting of more or less numerous strata of petty bourgeoisie, particularly the *peasants*. With the development of capitalism there is a steady differentiation in the peasantry and it loses the traits of a single class. The *poor* peasants have small land allotments, but their chief source of subsistence is not so much farming but the sale of their labour to the kulaks or the landowners. In effect, the rural poor are semi-proletarians or proletarians with a plot of land. By virtue of their condition, the poor peasants are reliable allies of the working class in the rural areas. The *middle peasants* live on income derived from their land allotments and as a rule do not sell their labour power. They have a dual social

nature. On the one hand, they are exploited by the ruling classes, the monopolies and the banks, and their economic condition is in many respects similar to that of the proletariat. On the other hand, the middle peasant is a proprietor and a petty producer who hopes to become a bigger proprietor. Therefore, the middle peasantry occupies an intermediate position between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and vacillates between them. Under the leadership of the proletariat it is capable of resolute action against the exploiters.

The ruin and ousting of the peasantry, as a result of which its numbers tend to decrease, is a law-governed process of capitalist development; this process is especially accelerated under state-monopoly capitalism.

As had been said above, alongside the rural petty bourgeoisie there are various social strata, like the urban petty bourgeoisie (craftsmen, artisans, small merchants and other small entrepreneurs), the intelligentsia and the office workers in the developed capitalist countries. Together with the peasantry, they constitute what is known as the *middle strata*, which occupy an intermediate, transitional position between the two class poles of capitalist society: the working class and the bourgeoisie.

Many Western sociologists assert that the middle strata, which they call the "middle classes", swallow up the major classes of capitalist society—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They manipulate statistical data to "prove" that these strata are enlarging tremendously, which, they say, tends to create a classless society. People are included in the "middle strata" on the strength of occupation, earnings and other indicators. The British sociologist Joel Montague regards the "middle classes" as "a series of strata sharing, within very broad limits, a distinctive style of life".¹ This vague definition makes it possible to include among the middle strata men from different, even antagonistic, classes, completely ignoring the relation of men to the means of production and their social status. No wonder this kind of approach puts people from different social classes and groups into the same stratum: it brackets

¹ Joel B. Montague Jr., *Class and Nationality*, New Haven, Conn., 1963, p. 70.

policemen and prison wardens, rich farmers, minor employees and skilled workers.

The current development of the capitalist countries shows the "middle classes" to be nothing but a myth. The numerical growth of some middle strata, which is actually taking place under capitalism, cannot erase the basic class division of capitalist society into the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; nor can it mitigate the contradiction between labour and capital. The facts prove the opposite. Despite the said growth, the class antagonisms, far from disappearing, are aggravated in a modern bourgeois society.

Under imperialism the rural petty bourgeoisie is ousted from the key branches of material production. In some cases its income has dropped below the wages of skilled industrial workers. The oppression of monopoly capital annually increases the number of bankruptcies among the petty bourgeoisie. In modern conditions the vital economic and political interests of the urban petty bourgeoisie coincide with those of the working class or come closer to them. This enables the revolutionary forces to draw the urban petty bourgeoisie into the united anti-imperialist front of struggle for peace, democracy and socialism.

The bulk of the intelligentsia (such as teachers, rank-and-file doctors, etc.) are drawing closer to the working class in material condition. There is a growing critical attitude towards the bourgeois social system among them, because that system is hostile to true cultural development and is incapable of ensuring brain workers broad creative activity and a stable position in life. The monopoly offensive against the vital rights of the intelligentsia, the sharpening of the class struggle and the successes of the socialist countries induce intellectuals to abandon the bourgeois world outlook and actively participate in the struggle for the revolutionary transformation of social life.

Office workers account for a large share of the social composition of the population of the developed capitalist countries. As a rule, they include wage-workers performing mental work and receiving wages in the form of salaries. Most of them are employed in the government, economic or commercial and banking spheres.

Like other social strata, office workers underwent

considerable changes under imperialism. In the past their salaries were much higher than workers' wages, and their privileged position allowed them to lead a bourgeois way of life. But things are different now. The living standard of many office employees is gradually coming down to that of industrial workers and the gap between the earnings of rank-and-file factory and office workers is disappearing. The mechanisation of office work has made it more similar to that of industrial workers and has considerably increased the actual subjugation of white-collar workers to capital.

Today office workers are divided into several groups, according to their social status. The top section which takes part in exploiting the working people is close to the ruling class. A part of the middle section engaged in the supervision and management of government agencies and business enterprises, and those who are in the personal service of the privileged sections, tends to draw closer to the bourgeoisie. Yet the bulk of the small and middle white-collar workers exist by selling their labour power to the capitalists. They are under the pressure of the monopolies, and are faced with the threat of unemployment and falling living standards; they belong to the lowest intermediate stratum whose status is close to that of the workers.

In bourgeois society, there is also a sizable stratum of declassed elements: beggars, bandits, thieves, prostitutes, the "Lumpenproletariat", the dregs of capitalism and its offspring. This stratum is being constantly swelled by people from various classes and social groups. Marx and Engels said in their day that the Lumpenproletariat, because of its condition, is inclined to sell itself for reactionary purposes. Today, too, the reactionary classes recruit men from its ranks to help them attain their selfish criminal aims. Thus, in the United States, gangsters are used to fight Negroes and progressives.

All this shows that the developed capitalist countries present a highly complex and motley picture of class relations. But whatever the changes in capitalism, its chief class distinction continues to be the antagonism between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

This antagonism finds its expression in the proletariat's

class struggle against the bourgeoisie which assumes three main forms: economic, political and ideological (theoretical).

Economic struggle is the fight of the workers for the best terms on which they can sell their labour power to the capitalist, for direct improvement of economic conditions and the restriction of exploitation. Its aim is to safeguard the professional interests of the working class.

Strikes, partial or general, are an effective weapon of the workers' economic struggle; any strike in a way reminds the employers that it is not they but the workers who are the real owners of the plants and mills.

Economic struggle plays an important role in safeguarding the daily interests and unity of the working class but it does not affect the roots of the capitalist system, and leaves the big private property and the political power of the capitalists intact. At best, it wrests partial concessions from the employers. That is why the attempts to make the economic struggle pivotal and reduce the class struggle of the proletariat to paltry wage rises are essentially opportunist.

As socialist consciousness is introduced into the working-class movement, the economic struggle develops into a *political* struggle and becomes the struggle of the workers as a class against the capitalists as a class. Political struggle is the main form of class struggle.

All other forms of class struggle are subordinate to political struggle. It includes the active steps of the proletariat, under the leadership of the revolutionary Marxist party, against bourgeois legislation, for the attainment of political freedoms, for the extension of the rights of the working class and ultimately for the winning of political power. Already in the course of their economic struggle, the workers become convinced that they cannot improve their condition without political struggle. Even the economic struggle can be waged on a wider scale only if the workers have the right of assembly and association, their own press and their own representatives in parliament. Political struggle embraces extensive nation-wide actions by the proletariat for the satisfaction of its cardinal class interests. In politics, the workers' class struggle cannot be confined to particulars but must spread to the very essence,

to the *establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat*. Lenin wrote: "Marxism recognises a class struggle as fully developed, 'nation-wide', *only* if it does not merely embrace politics but takes in the most significant thing in politics—the organisation of state power."¹

Recognition of the historical inevitability of the winning of state power by the working class is the most important theoretical proposition and revolutionary conclusion of Marxism-Leninism. The experience of all the countries of the world socialist system has convincingly shown that the state power of the working class is the principal means for building a new society.

The renegades of Marxism, all sorts of revisionist elements like to talk about the influence of the working class on the state power, but gloss over the need for the proletariat to win independent political power. In practice this means disarming the working class in the face of class enemies.

The following proposition advanced by Lenin is decisive for understanding the chief aims and tasks of the political struggle of the working class: "Those who recognise *only* the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the bounds of bourgeois thinking and bourgeois politics. To confine Marxism to the theory of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something acceptable to the bourgeoisie. A Marxist is solely someone who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is what constitutes the most profound distinction between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and recognition of Marxism should be tested."²

The third form of class struggle is the *ideological* struggle. It is a scientific, ideological and theoretical struggle, waged with the aim of bringing the socialist ideology into the minds of working class, and completely overcoming the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie.

The consistent, organised revolutionary struggle of the

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 122.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, pp. 411-12.

proletariat against the ruling class is impossible without a revolutionary theory, which must give a scientific expression to its interests, aims and tasks. The introduction of advanced revolutionary ideology into the working-class movement, the linking up of the theory of scientific socialism with the working-class movement are a necessary condition for transforming the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat into a conscious and victorious struggle. The obstacle is bourgeois ideology.

The ruling class does everything it can to obscure the class consciousness of the proletariat, to undermine its confidence in its own strength and thus to perpetuate the capitalist system. It has a big propaganda machine and powerful means for shaping public opinion. The press, radio, television, speeches and religious sermons are all used to spread and inculcate bourgeois ideas and views.

The bourgeoisie strives to influence the working class through reformism in the working-class movement and through revisionism and dogmatism in the communist movement. Right-wing Social-Democracy in contemporary conditions is the most important ideological and political mainstay of the bourgeoisie within the working-class movement. Previously, Right-wing Social-Democrats refused to extend recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat; today, many of them reject not only the class struggle but even the existence of antagonistic classes in capitalist society. The leaders of the Right-wing Socialists in some countries have completely capitulated—ideologically and politically—to the imperialist forces. The ideology and policy of anti-communism have led the social-reformists into an ideological and political impasse.

Exposing the ideological propositions of the Right-wing Social-Democratic leaders the Communists are simultaneously working for unity of action with the Social-Democrats, and uniting all working people for joint struggle against imperialism.

Today bourgeois sociological literature dwells at length about the “disappearance of classes”, “the slackening down of the class struggle” and the “community of interests” of the employers and the workers. Bulky volumes, thick magazines and pretentiously illustrated newspapers in

many countries are filled with allegations that it is no longer possible now to distinguish the bourgeois from the worker, that the class struggle has "become outmoded" and that the epoch of "social peace" has set in. They assert that the class struggle is unnatural and throws society back, and speak of "harmony of class interests" and "social peace", which they claim, are the "motive forces of progress". The French sociologist Raymond Aron alleges that technological progress has not led to the enrichment of the capitalists, but to a reduction of working hours, that it has brought the interests of the workers and the employers closer together, and that the majority of workers in the West are not interested in the class struggle and revolution.¹

These ideas have become widespread in the so-called theories of social mobility which stands for any noticeable movements of men in society. According to these theories, there are two kinds of mobility: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal mobility is the movement of men from one place of residence to another, from one job to another, within their social strata. Vertical mobility is the principal movement of men from one social stratum to another. The advocates of such theories are endeavouring to prove that in modern capitalist society social mobility supplants the class struggle. They assert that here each man has the possibility of ascending the social ladder and that all have an equal chance of becoming employers and millionaires. Hence the conclusion that the concepts "bourgeoisie", "proletariat" and "class struggle" have lost their meaning and are useless for science.

All this contradicts reality. Of course, there are individual cases of people moving into the "higher spheres" in capitalist countries. The main point, however, is that the overwhelming majority of working people under capitalism have no real chances for changing their status. They can achieve much through collective struggle but while there is capitalism they remain an oppressed and exploited mass without whom the very existence of capitalism is impossible.

In present-day conditions the aggravation of class

¹ See R. Aron, *La lutte des classes*, Paris, 1964.

contradictions in the capitalist system and the increasing exploitation of the working people intensify the class struggle. Contrary to the forecasts of bourgeois Right-wing socialist and revisionist theoreticians, the class struggle in the capitalist countries is not dying down. It is spreading and becoming more acute. Since the end of the war the number of strikes and strikers has grown considerably as compared with the pre-war period: between 1919 to 1939, there were 177,400 strikes involving 80,800,000 people, while from 1946 to 1966, there were 387,600 strikes involving 297,900,000 people.

While the number of factory and office workers in the developed capitalist countries has increased 50-100 per cent in the post-war years as compared with the pre-war period, the average annual number of strikers has risen 250 per cent. A particularly tenacious strike struggle is waged by the proletarians of Italy, Japan, France, Belgium, the U.S.A., Britain and some other countries. It follows that the scope of the strike movement has increased considerably. This means that the assertions to the effect that strikes have become obsolete, that they have outlived themselves and are behind the times hold absolutely no water.

A feature of the present stage of the strike movement is that the working class is using flexible tactics and diverse forms of strikes against capital and is working out new methods of struggle. What is known as reverse strikes are now widespread in some countries alongside the well-known form of strike when all work is stopped. In Italy, for example, unemployed industrial and agricultural workers on their own initiative perform various socially useful jobs such as building canals, repairing and building roads, and then, supported by the local population, demand payment for their work. Sometimes workers remain at an enterprise where it is planned to cut back or stop production, and organise the manufacture and marketing of the products themselves. In actual fact they take over the plants that are about to close down.

A characteristic feature of the present stage of the class battles is that the range of economic and political demands of the working class has broadened considerably. Under state-monopoly capitalism it is not only individual indu-

trialists and their associations that confront the working class in the economic sphere but also the bourgeois state itself. Hence the economic struggle of the proletariat objectively acquires political significance and a political character. The struggle of the working class for its vital economic demands (higher wages, reduction of working hours, changes in social legislation, etc.) is combined and closely interweaves with the political struggle for democratic freedoms, radical constitutional changes and anti-monopoly reforms.

Factory and office workers in France, Italy and other countries are ever more resolutely demanding the nationalisation of key economic branches, participation of trade unions in factory management and radical anti-monopoly reforms. The working people of Japan are in increasing measure tying up the demands for higher wages with demands for dismantling U.S. military bases and prohibiting the entry of U.S. nuclear submarines into Japanese ports. In the U.S.A., the 20 million Negroes have considerably stepped up their fight for civil rights and against racial discrimination. There is a mounting wave of protest of the American working people against U.S. imperialism's lousy war in Vietnam.

The proportion of political strikes in the strike movement has considerably increased in recent years. While in 1958, 11-12 million people, or 40 per cent of the total number of strikers, were involved in political strikes in capitalist countries, in 1963, they embraced over 36 million, or about 62 per cent of all strikers. The increasing number of political strikes vividly proves that the class consciousness of the working class is growing. Nation-wide political actions by the working people against monopoly capital have become highly significant. In the period between 1958 and 1962, over 80 nation-wide strikes against the rule of monopoly capital, its domination over the nation and the country, were held in 40 capitalist states.

An important feature of the class struggle in present-day conditions is the increasing cohesion with the working class of other social strata fighting against the oppression of the monopolies. Peasants, petty urban proprietors, engineers, technicians, low- and middle-income brackets of white-collar workers are realising more and more that their basic

interests coincide with those of the working class, and are increasingly drawn into the anti-monopoly struggle. In some countries there was mass peasant action against the state and the monopolies whose combined efforts are intensifying the oppression and ruin of small holders, depriving them of prospects for independent existence. Government employees, teachers and students held big strikes in Japan, Italy and other countries. Today people with diverse world outlooks, from Communists and Socialists to Catholics, are rising in defence of democracy.

In some capitalist countries (France, Spain) the more realistically-minded Catholic clergy, taking into account that the balance of forces in the world and in their countries has changed in favour of socialism, are turning their faces to the masses and are coming out for a dialogue with the Marxists.

It follows, therefore, that broad anti-monopoly front is being formed in the developed capitalist countries. This is a law-governed process. The aggravation of contradictions between monopoly capital and the interests of the whole nation narrows the social basis of the domination of the monopolies, expands the social basis of the class struggle and increases the number of the proletariat's allies. That is why the general democratic demands are playing an increasing role in the struggle of the working class and all working people.

With the growth and strengthening of the united anti-monopoly front the working class and its allies acquire increasing opportunities for using the democratic rights and institutions which they have won to fight against monopoly rule. The democratic reforms which, due to the pressure of the masses, are enacted in the interests of the working class and other strata of working people expand the bridgehead of a decisive offensive on capitalism. That is why the fight for democracy and extension of the rights of the masses is an important constituent of class battles and a component of the struggle for socialism.

An important role in the class struggle is played by *political groupings and parties*. Lenin said that the struggle of parties was the fullest and most complete expression of the political class struggle.

Political parties exist because there are classes, and each

party is inalienably bound up with a definite class. A party represents the most active section of a class and in its activity expresses the interests of this class. There are no non-class parties in society. Some sociologists in an effort to cover up the class nature of bourgeois parties insist that they unite people with identical convictions and allege that they are unrelated to classes. To illustrate this they point to the existence of two-party systems in some capitalist countries and assert that they express the interests of all classes. Actually, however, the two-party system merely strengthens the domination of the bourgeoisie. The existence of many bourgeois parties in no sense refutes the thesis about their class content. The fact of the matter is that, being of a bourgeois class character, different parties also express the interests of diverse social groups of the capitalist class, which explains the existence of specific differences in their political programmes, particularly in the ways for effectuating the domestic and foreign policies of the bourgeoisie.

It follows that the working class is by no means indifferent to what bourgeois party is in power. This, above all, is important for working out the *tactics of struggle* at a particular stage of the development of political life in the country.

In capitalist countries today there are also many *petty-bourgeois parties*, catering to the interests of various strata of the petty bourgeoisie and associated social groups. The dual nature of the petty bourgeoisie as a social class determines the inconsistency, vacillation, zigzags and sudden turns in the policy of its parties.

Of all the modern political parties, the most massive and genuinely revolutionary are the Communist and Workers' Marxist-Leninist Parties, which are the most organised and advanced sections of the working class in each country and express the vital interests not only of the workers but of all working people. Marxist-Leninist parties are the political leaders of the proletariat. From the very outset they act as the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat.

The first Communist Party—the Communist League—organised by Marx and Engels had about 300 members; today there are 88 Marxist-Leninist parties on all conti-

nents uniting almost 50 million courageous and honest fighters for communism. The world communist movement has strengthened and expanded its positions as the most influential political force of our day and a major factor of social progress. The Communist Parties in capitalist countries are working for the unity of all democratic forces and parties capable of fighting for social progress, for the liquidation of monopoly rule.

3. Classes and Class Struggle in Countries Which Are Fighting for or Have Won National Independence

The class structure of these countries differs in many ways from that of the advanced capitalist countries. The existence of numerous feudal survivals and in some cases even of the remnants of slave-owning relations, and the combination of pre-capitalist and capitalist relations of production create a peculiar class structure. At the same time, the newly free countries or those that are freeing themselves substantially differ from each other in the composition, numerical strength and role of the various social classes. For instance, most of the Latin American countries have a relatively developed working class and bourgeoisie. In many African countries the national bourgeoisie and the working class are in their embryonic stage, while the communal form of property prevails in agriculture. The class structure of the Asian countries is a motley one. In India, for instance, there is a big bourgeoisie, but there is none in Nepal, Cambodia and Laos.

The working class is young and small in most of these countries, because their industry has started developing relatively recently and is still small. But its numerical strength is growing from year to year. Although the newly free countries differ from each other in many respects the following features are common to their working class.

1. It is a small section of the population because the industry of these countries is still weak. In some Asian and African countries the industrial proletariat began to emerge only after the Second World War.

2. Unskilled and low skilled workers are predominant among the industrial proletariat (up to 80-90 per cent in Asia and Africa). Their low skills are due to the low level of general education (80-90 per cent of the population of these countries are illiterate). There is wider use of the labour of women and children in industry than is the case in the developed countries.

3. A considerable section of the working class is concentrated on small and medium enterprises. This accounts for its fragmentation, which is having a negative effect on the formation of its class consciousness and makes it harder for all workers to unite and wage a joint struggle against capital.

4. There is a considerable number of agricultural workers.

The *peasantry* is a natural ally of the working class. Numerically, it is the biggest section of the population in these countries. The vast majority of the peasants live in extremely bad conditions. In Asia, Latin America and Africa, the practice is to parcel out land among the peasants with tenancy on harsh terms. Most of the peasants there are either land hungry or have none at all. Landless peasants make up 66 per cent of the total rural population in India, 60 per cent in Iran, more than 80 per cent in Iraq, about 70 per cent in the Lebanon, 50 per cent in Morocco and 72 per cent in Argentina. Therefore peasants are forced to lease land from the landowners.

In the Latin American countries, the peasants are exploited not only by the local landowners and the bourgeoisie but also by the monopolies of the United States and other imperialist countries. United Fruit Company, for instance, owns more than a million hectares of land, and has its own banana, sugar-cane and cocoa plantations. The feudal and semi-feudal oppression of the landowners is closely intertwined with the colonial oppression of foreign monopolies. Therefore the elimination of colonial oppression is inseparably bound up with the eradication of feudal survivals in the countryside.

An alliance between the working class and the peasantry, under the leadership of the working class, is the most important force in carrying out profound revolutionary transformations and in consolidating the national independ-

ence of the developing countries. This alliance is destined to be the basis of a broad national front of struggle against imperialism and colonialism.

The *bourgeoisie* in many newly free countries is divided into such strata as the *national bourgeoisie* and the *pro-imperialist, comprador bourgeoisie*.

The *national bourgeoisie* is a stratum of the bourgeoisie whose economic and political interests are infringed by the domination of the imperialist countries and which is objectively interested in developing the productive forces and exploiting the national market without interference from the parent state. This stratum, as a rule, invests its capital in the development of national production and strives to expel the foreign monopolies from the economy and free itself from foreign dependence.

The *pro-imperialist, comprador bourgeoisie* is a stratum whose economic and political interests are bound up with the foreign monopolies dominating the country and which is hostile to the patriotic national forces. This stratum wants to preserve its privileges obtained from the parent state, and is a bulwark of the colonial oppression of imperialism.

The class of *landowners* is economically strong and politically influential in most of the newly free countries. It includes hereditary feudals, like the rajahs of the "self-governing" feudal principalities in India, Arab sheikhs, owners of latifundia and vast herds of cattle in Latin America, and the "new" landowners from among the usurers, traders and officials who had bought up land from ruined peasants.

The class of landowners is concerned with preserving its privileges and, as a rule, is hostile to the national liberation struggle. It is the main force of internal reaction and colonialism.

The imperialist monopolies still control the economy and resources of many Asian, African and Latin American countries and amass huge profits. The imperialists are arrogantly interfering in the internal affairs of the newly free countries, increasing subversive activity against revolutionary governments and hatching plots against them. That is why *the main content of the class struggle in the newly free countries are bitter clashes between the pro-*

gressive forces and the crafty imperialist foe and internal reaction.

The working class is the most consistent and resolute fighter against imperialist oppression for complete national independence and freedom. When it wins hegemony of the national liberation movement, it quickly solves all its major problems, considerably accelerates the country's transition to the non-capitalist path of development and, in the final count, to socialist transformations.

In many of the former colonial and dependent countries, the national bourgeoisie leads the national liberation struggle. So far it has not exhausted its inherent progressive tendencies. But owing to its dual nature it is inclined to conciliation with imperialism and feudalism. Therefore, its policy may be not only progressive but reactionary, too. In certain conditions, it can even form a direct alliance with imperialism and betray the revolution.

In some countries, where there is no working class as yet or where it is still weak, the leadership of the national liberation movement is assumed by revolutionary-democratic forces which express the interests of the peasants, handicraftsmen, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the patriotic intelligentsia, and so forth.

The cardinal problem of the newly free countries is that of choosing the way for their further socio-economic and political development. Various classes and parties advance their own ideas of overcoming economic backwardness and poverty. As regards the toiling people and all progressive forces in these countries, they are ever more resolutely linking up the prospects of the complete victory of the national liberation revolution with *non-capitalist development*. Important social reforms have already been carried out in the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Mali, Guinea, Congo (Brazzaville), Burma and elsewhere. Their revolutionary leadership, backed by the popular masses, abolishes foreign monopolies, nationalises capitalist enterprises, develops the state sector in the economy and puts through social reforms in the interests of the people.

From their own experience the peoples of the newly free countries are becoming convinced that socialism is their only road to freedom and happiness. The ideas of scientific socialism, in their concrete application to the life

and struggle of the peoples of these countries, will inevitably triumph there, too, despite the resistance of the imperialists and reactionaries of all hues.

4. Classes and Class Struggle in the Socialist Countries in the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism

The ultimate goal of the working-class struggle is the establishment of a classless communist society. The main prerequisite for the eradication of classes is the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. Lenin wrote that "in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters ... not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time".¹

The experience of the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries has shown that to abolish classes and class distinctions it is necessary:

first, to put an end to the rule of the exploiter classes, and abolish their private ownership of the means of production—the economic basis of exploitation of man by man;

secondly, to transform the individual, small commodity farms into large collective farms, complete the formation of a single socialist system of economy and eliminate the kulaks, the last of the exploiting classes;

thirdly, to fully overcome the class distinctions between the workers and peasants, and also the essential distinctions between town and country and between mental and physical labour.

The first two problems were solved in the U.S.S.R. in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, while the third problem is being solved in the period of the gradual transition from socialism to communism.

The existence of different economic structures is inevit-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

able in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Not less than three economic structures—socialist, petty commodity production and capitalist, with the socialist structure playing the leading role—are to be found in all socialist countries in that period. These structures have their corresponding classes: the working class, the petty commodity producers (predominantly peasants) and the bourgeoisie. As for the class of landowners, it ceases to exist following the liquidation of the landed estates, its economic basis.

The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat lays the beginning for the abolition of the exploiting classes and radically changes society's class structure. With the loss of its political power and the nationalisation of the basic means of production, the bourgeoisie ceases to be a major class and becomes a minor one and is subsequently abolished altogether. The working class stops being an oppressed class and becomes the ruling class, acting as the organiser and guide of socialist construction and society's leading force. From a class that under capitalism was deprived of the means of production it turns into a class which owns them together with the rest of the working people. The working peasantry becomes a major class. The masses of poor and middle peasants are freed from landowner oppression and kulak bondage. The organisation of collective farms opens up before the peasants broad prospects for uninterrupted growth of their material and cultural standards. The working class and the working peasantry consolidate and develop their alliance on the basis of the community of vital economic and political interests. A new, socialist intelligentsia appears in the transition period.

The radical change in the class structure of society determines a corresponding change in the forms of class struggle. The class struggle does not stop in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, but its tasks, forms and means undergo essential changes considerably owing to its changing objective conditions. This is primarily due to the fact that now the working class conducts the struggle as the ruling class possessing such a powerful weapon as the state. The tasks of the struggle also become different. The two most important are: first,

it is necessary to fight against the exploiters, suppress their resistance and finally abolish them. The chief contradiction of the transition period is the antagonistic contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the class struggle between the forces of growing socialism and the dying capitalism is conducted in all spheres of social life. The outcome of this struggle depends enormously on whom the peasantry will follow—the working class or the bourgeoisie. Hence the second major task of the class struggle is systematically to guide and influence the working peasantry. Lenin pointed out that this influence is inconceivable without a struggle, a struggle of a special kind in which persuasion, example, patient explanation and development of socialist consciousness play a very important role.

The forms of class struggle also change. In the early years of Soviet rule, Lenin, in his draft for the pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, laid particular emphasis on the following forms of the working-class struggle in Soviet Russia: (1) Suppression of the resistance of the exploiters. (2) Civil war. (3) “Neutralisation” of the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry. (4) “Utilisation” of the bourgeoisie. (5) Inculcation of a new discipline.¹

The first of these forms of struggle during the transition from capitalism to socialism is the *suppression of the resistance of the exploiters*. In the course of the establishment and consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class encounters the stubborn resistance of the overthrown exploiter classes, the landowners and the urban and rural bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie still possesses greater administrative and organisational experience and a higher level of education than the working class. It has numerous specialists and retains considerable financial resources and personal property. Another source from which the bourgeoisie draws its strength is the existence of commodity production which in the transition period can breed capitalism continuously and on a mass scale. International capitalism and the imperialist camp is the chief base and one of the main sources of the

¹ See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 96, 97, 98.

strength of the overthrown exploiters. The deposed bourgeoisie retains its international ties and is consistently supported by world capital in its struggle against the victorious working class.

The suppression of the exploiters' resistance by the working class is an historical inevitability. It is effected by economic, political, military and other means, depending on concrete conditions and the acuteness of the class struggle.

The second form of class struggle during the transition from capitalism to socialism is *civil war*, the most acute form of struggle between antagonistic classes, in which they take up arms against each other.

In the Soviet state, the exploiting classes, after being defeated in mutinies and in kulak uprisings, and having realised that they are not strong enough to win political power, joined with external imperialist forces and unleashed a civil war. At the cost of great effort and sacrifice, the working people of Soviet Russia led by the Communist Party routed the forces of military intervention and internal counter-revolution and won the civil war.

In the European People's Democracies the situation was different. As a result of the rout of nazism by the Soviet Army and the internal forces of these countries and also thanks to the Soviet Union's assistance to the liberated peoples, this form of class struggle did not develop there. Consequently, civil war cannot be considered a general law of the class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Its outbreak depends on concrete historical conditions, most of all on the resistance of the exploiters, its nature, etc.

The third form of the proletariat's class struggle in the transition period is the "*neutralisation*" of the *petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry*. In the narrow sense of the word, neutralisation meant a working-class policy aimed at preventing the middle peasantry from siding with the bourgeoisie. Actually, it was a struggle waged by the working class for influencing the peasantry and for winning it over to its side.

The working class takes into account the dual nature of the petty commodity producers. On the one hand, they are working people and do not exploit the labour of

others, which brings them close to the workers. On the other, they are private proprietors and commodity producers, and this brings them close to the bourgeoisie. Because of their dual nature, the peasantry inevitably displays instability and vacillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the transition period. In these conditions, it is the task of the working class to help the peasants overcome their private ownership mentality, tear them away from the influence of capital and draw them into active socialist construction.

During the October Revolution, in the first year of Soviet power in Russia, the middle peasants strongly vacillated between the working class and the bourgeoisie. That being the case, the working class conducted a policy of "neutralising" the middle peasantry to prevent it from siding with the bourgeoisie. When at the end of 1918 and beginning of 1919 it became clear that the middle peasants had finally decided in favour of Soviet power, the Communist Party supplanted the policy of "neutralising" them with a policy of establishing a firm alliance with them. But the struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie for influence over the middle peasantry continued until the exploiting classes were completely abolished.

In the People's Democracies, the working-class struggle for influence over the peasantry has specific features of its own, the chief being that there was no need to conduct a policy of neutralising the middle peasantry. This was due to the fact that during the preparations for the socialist revolution and when it was conducted, there was an alliance between the working class, as the leader of the revolution, and the broad masses of working people, whose interests completely coincided with those of the working class. This alliance was largely consolidated in the general democratic struggle against the forces of fascist reaction.

The fourth form of class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, according to Lenin, is the "*utilisation*" of the bourgeoisie, that is, the recruitment of bourgeois intellectuals into socialist construction. This task comes to the fore in all countries advancing along the new, revolutionary road of development, because

the normal operation of the national economy and the state machinery as well as scientific, technical and cultural development require specialists whom the working class lacks almost completely when it comes to power. The working class not only has to suppress the resistance of the exploiters and influence the peasantry but also to utilise bourgeois specialists in the construction of socialist society and to re-educate the old intelligentsia.

The working class has to wage a stubborn struggle against its class enemies for influence over the intellectuals. The top layer of the old intelligentsia, which has coalesced with the class of capitalists, as a rule refuses to serve the new power. The numerous middle group of the intelligentsia does not immediately find its place in the general struggle and hesitates for a time before joining one of the camps. The proletarian intelligentsia loses no time in actively joining construction of the new life. The working class, while resolutely suppressing the saboteurs and wreckers, displays special tact, patience and care in dealing with the mass of the old intellectuals. Parallel with the task of re-educating the old intellectuals in the initial period of development of socialist countries the task of creating a new, socialist intelligentsia from among the workers and peasants is also solved.

The fifth form of class struggle of the proletariat in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is the *inculcation of a new discipline*. "Every new social order," Lenin wrote, "demands new relations between man and man, a new discipline."¹ In order to build socialism, it is necessary not only to abolish the exploiting classes, remould the petty commodity producers in the socialist spirit and utilise the bourgeois intellectuals, but also radically to remould the consciousness of the working masses. Accordingly, the working class conducts a struggle for implanting a new attitude to labour, for preserving and increasing social property, obliterating the survivals of capitalism in the minds of the people and for the observance of the communist morality. "Doesn't the class struggle in the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism take the form of safeguarding the interests of the working class

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 515.

against the few, the groups and sections of workers who stubbornly cling to capitalist traditions and continue to regard the Soviet state in the old way: work as little and as badly as they can and grab as much money as possible from the state.”¹

A very important means in the fight against the exploiters for inculcating a new discipline and eradicating the habits and traditions of the old society is the socialist education of the working people, in which explanation and persuasion are the chief means, although compulsion against those who stubbornly refuse to submit to the new discipline is not ruled out. The socialist state and law become a powerful instrument of educating the working people and of punishing those who persistently disrupt discipline.

Thus, in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, the working class continues to wage a resolute class struggle for fulfilling its aims and tasks, but with new means and in new forms. The class struggle in this period remains one of the motive forces of social development.

5. The Overcoming of Class Distinctions in the Period of Gradual Transition from Socialism to Communism

As a result of the completion of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, on the basis of the consolidation and development of the socialist mode of production, radical changes take place in the social structure of society. Class antagonisms disappear with the abolition of the exploiting classes and the distinctions between town and country and between mental and physical labour are gradually erased. Socialist society consists of two friendly classes—the workers and the collective farmers—and a social strata of people’s intelligentsia.

The radical changes in the class structure of society are manifested not only in the abolition of the exploiter classes but also in the profound changes in the social countenance of all social groups. The working class has completely and for ever freed itself from all forms of exploi-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 97.

tation and is wholly concentrated at socialist enterprises. No workers are employed at private capitalist enterprises. The peasants have been transformed from a class of petty proprietors into a class organised in large collective farms. The social differentiation of the peasants into the poor, the middle and the rich has been done away with completely. The intelligentsia arises directly from the ranks of the working people. It has all its roots in the people and serves them. The welfare and the cultural standards of the workers, collective farmers and intellectuals improve with every passing year and their communist consciousness grows.

The chief distinctive feature of socialism in the class sense is the socio-political and ideological unity of society, signifying its new qualitative state, in which a community of economic and political interests and a single ideology for the whole people have been achieved. The economic basis of this socio-political and ideological unity is the socialist mode of production, which has won out not only in the town but in the country as well. The political basis of this unity is the socialist state system and consistent democracy ensuring the all-round development of the individual. All members of socialist society have real democratic rights to labour, rest, education, freedom of speech, the press, assembly, etc. The ideological basis of unity is socialist ideology, Marxism-Leninism.

The working class is the most advanced and organised class of socialist society, because it alone can help the working people to unite and safeguard and consolidate communist society and complete its construction.

The alliance of the working class and the collective farmers under the leadership of the former is the prime prerequisite for completely surmounting class distinctions and building a classless society.

What is the basis of the working class's leading role and how is this role manifested?

In the *economic* sphere it is the chief productive force of socialist society, ensuring steady technological progress and introducing new forms of labour organisation and management of production and new forms of socialist emulation. The working class, directly connected with the property of the whole people, ensures the growth of heavy

industry and gives great assistance to the collective farmers by equipping agricultural production with new machinery. This assistance of the socialist town to the countryside, combined with the labour of the workers in agriculture, is the decisive condition for the further rise of agricultural production.

In the *political* sphere, the role of the working class is most strikingly revealed in the fact that it is the leader of the alliance of the workers and the peasants. The working class exercises its guiding influence on society by its high degree of organisation and consciousness and political activity in state and mass organisations. It cements into a single whole the nations and nationalities and develops and strengthens their friendship.

In the sphere of *ideology* the role of the working class is expressed in its ideological influence on society, in cultural construction, because it is the most consistent vehicle of communist ideals, a fighter for socialist internationalism and champion of the fraternal solidarity of peoples.

The workers, peasants and intellectuals in socialist society are united on the main point: the relation to the means of production. The property of the whole people is the common property of all members of society; they are all equally concerned in its development and growth. That is what primarily makes up the basis of the common vital interests of all social groups. Therefore with the victory of socialism, the class distinctions between the workers and peasants have in the main been overcome.

In socialist society, however, there remain some distinctions between them, particularly the distinction in their relation to the means of production. This distinction arises from the fact that the workers work at state enterprises, which are the property of the entire people, and constitute the highest degree of the socialisation of the means of production, while the peasants work in collective farms, which are the property of separate groups of men and where only the chief means of production are socialised. There is also a certain distinction in the role they play in the social organisation of labour. The state enterprises where the working class is employed are a higher form of organisation of social labour than the collective farms.

It should also be added that under socialism the working class plays the leading part in the organisation of social labour.

There are also some distinctions between the working class and the collective-farm peasantry in the mode of obtaining a share of the social wealth and its size. In line with the single socialist principle of distribution according to labour, the workers are paid wages for their labour in cash from the social consumption fund, whereas the peasants receive their income in cash and in kind from the income of their collective farm and a part from their personal subsidiary farms.

At present, the Soviet Union has entered a historical period of development, when a classless, communist society is gradually being set up.

The C.P.S.U. Programme strikingly characterises the communist social system. "Communism," it states, "is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; under it, the all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology; all the springs of co-operative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs' will be implemented. Communism is a highly organised society of free, socially conscious working people in which public self-government will be established, a society in which labour for the good of society will become the prime vital requirement of everyone, a necessity recognised by one and all, and the ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people."¹

Thus, communism is a classless society where full social equality of people is achieved. All its members will have equal relation to the means of production, equal conditions of work and distribution and will actively participate in the management of public affairs. Communist equality should not be identified with wage-levelling when all people get an equal share of the material and cultural values. It means that all members of society will be afforded equal

¹ *The Road to Communism*, p. 509.

conditions and opportunities for an all-round and full development of their abilities.

Lenin said that for the complete elimination of classes a great step forward had to be made in the development of the productive forces. The economic basis for the complete elimination of class distinctions is the comprehensive development of the productive forces and the improvement of the socialist relations of production.

In complete conformity with Lenin's behests, the Programme of the C.P.S.U. considers the creation of the material and technical basis of communism to be the principal economic task of the U.S.S.R. There will be a great economic and cultural advance in town and country as a result of the electrification of the whole country, chemicalisation of the national economy, improvement of technology, complex mechanisation and automation of production processes and a considerable growth in the productivity of labour. Agriculture is drawing ever closer to industry as regards the machine-to-worker ratio and organisation of production, thus changing the nature of the peasant's labour and the peasant himself who is becoming a skilled worker with technical knowledge matching that of the industrial worker.

The Five-Year Economic Development Plan of the U.S.S.R. for 1966-70 envisages fresh moves to eliminate the essential distinctions between town and country. Higher growth rates of labour productivity are envisaged for agriculture than for industry. It is planned to increase capital investments into the whole of the economy by 50 per cent and into agriculture by 100 per cent, as compared with the preceding five-year plan. A huge amount of tractors, harvesters, lorries and other agricultural machinery will flow into the rural areas. The total amount of electricity consumed by agricultural production will increase by 200 per cent.

An important social task which has to be fulfilled during the five-year period is that of achieving a further approximation of the material and cultural standards of the rural and urban population, the collective farmers and workers. The incomes of the collective farmers from public economy will go up from 35 to 40 per cent, and the wages of factory and office workers will rise by 20 per cent. The

pension scheme established for factory and office workers has been extended to the collective farmers, and the size of the pension grants will be increased. As living standards of the collective farmers rise there is considerable improvement in the cultural level and the mode of life in the countryside. The rural areas receive greater assistance from urban cultural and educational establishments and theatres. In the current five-year period everyday services will increase by 150 per cent throughout the country and by more than 200 per cent in the rural areas. Extensive housing construction will be conducted both in towns and villages.

The construction of communist society presupposes the eradication of distinctions not only between the workers and peasants but also between them and the intellectuals, a process that is connected with the elimination of the essential distinctions between mental and physical labour.

The complex mechanisation and automation of production, and the growth of the cultural and technical level of the working people, will lead to an organic fusion of mental and physical labour in the productive activity of men, and to an obliteration of the distinctions between them.

As the distinctions between the workers, collective farmers and the intellectuals are gradually erased, these social groups will draw closer and closer to each other. In the long run the intelligentsia will cease to be a special social group, because all working people as regards their cultural and technical level will rise to the level of brain workers.

Following the abolition of exploiter classes, the relations between the classes in the country are no longer relations of class struggle. But this does not mean that the question of class struggle does not exist for the U.S.S.R. It must be borne in mind that in the country there are still survivals of capitalism, and the struggle against them has a certain class character. Moreover, these survivals are sustained and revived by the capitalist world from the outside.

It must also be remembered that the outer front of the class struggle wholly remains even in conditions of the victorious socialism, as long as the capitalist world exists.

6. Class Struggle in the International Arena

The present epoch, whose main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism, is an epoch of struggle between the two world social systems, socialism and capitalism. These systems differ from each other in principle because they have a different socio-economic, political and ideological basis. *The contradiction between capitalism and socialism is the main contradiction of our epoch. Relations between them are not just relations between different states, but relations of class struggle between the working class and the other working people, who have won power in some countries, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, which remains in power in other countries, on the other.*

International developments have fully proved the correctness of the basic conclusion formulated in the Statement of the 1960 Moscow Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties that the principal content, direction and peculiarities of social development in the contemporary epoch are determined by the world socialist system, by the forces fighting against imperialism, for the remaking of society along socialist lines. *The correlation of forces in the world arena is continuing to change in favour of socialism and the working-class and the national liberation movements.*

At the same time the international situation is characterised by imperialism's efforts to consolidate its positions, and, where possible, to assume counter-offensive in an effort to regain its lost positions. The principal cause of the increasing aggressiveness of imperialism, and above all of the U.S. imperialism, the world's gendarme, lies in the aggravation of difficulties and contradictions confronting the world capitalist system.

The class struggle in the international arena is conducted in all the main spheres of social life, economic, political and ideological, and has its own specifics.

The *economic struggle* in the international arena differs in essence and method from the economic struggle inside the capitalist countries. The working class and the other working people in the capitalist countries wage an economic struggle for better living conditions in which strikes

play an important role. In the international arena, the economic struggle takes the form of economic competition between the two world systems. Competition in the economic sphere is the chief field of struggle between socialism and capitalism, because the production of material wealth plays the decisive role in the life of society. It provides the answer to the world-historic argument which system is better and more capable of ensuring a higher labour productivity and better living conditions for all.

The world socialist system as a whole has already caught up with the world capitalist system in per capita industrial output. Its share in world industrial production rose from 20 per cent in 1950 to 38 per cent in 1965. The achievement of the targets of the new five-year economic development plan of the U.S.S.R. will further strengthen the economic positions of the countries of the socialist community and bring about new changes on the world scene in favour of socialism.

Socialist countries are also conducting an unflagging *political struggle* against imperialism. They are defending the sovereignty and independence of states and working for the unification of all progressive, democratic forces in the struggle for peace and for the formation of an anti-imperialist front. This struggle is waged in the United Nations Organisation, at international congresses, meetings and elsewhere.

The reactionary circles of the imperialist countries are pursuing a policy of aggression and cold war, they whip up the arms race and create new hotbeds of war. This is made particularly evident by the criminal war of the U.S. imperialists against the Vietnamese people, by the growth of the revanchist and militarist forces in West Germany. As long as imperialism exists there will always be ground for aggressive wars, and, consequently, the threat of war remains.

The U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries tirelessly unmask imperialism's aggressive policy and at the same time consistently conduct a policy of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. They are working for normal, peaceful relations with all countries, for solving controversial international issues not through war but through negotiation. But they are also strengthening their

military might, because this is a necessary condition for waging an effective struggle against the threat of war emanating from imperialism.

Peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems is a special form of class struggle between socialism and capitalism. It has to be borne in mind, however, that the concept of "peaceful coexistence" applies only to the relations between states and cannot extend to the relations between classes in capitalist countries, i.e., to the relations between the exploiters and the exploited, or to the relations between the colonialists and the victims of colonial oppression.

There is an acute *ideological struggle* between the two social systems on the international scene.

Practice shows that it is possible to avoid armed conflicts between different social systems, but there is no avoiding the ideological struggle. That is why the concept "peaceful coexistence" cannot be extended to relations between socialist and capitalist ideologies. There can be certain compromises between socialist and capitalist countries in the sphere of economic and political relations, but there can be no concessions to bourgeois ideology. "In all circumstances," the report of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. to the 23rd Congress of the Party states, "the struggle against the bourgeois ideology must be uncompromising, because it is a class struggle, a struggle for man, for his dignity and freedom, a struggle to invigorate the positions of socialism and communism, in the interests of the international working class."¹

Anti-communism, the chief weapon of bourgeois ideology in the struggle against socialist ideology, emerged at the dawn of the working-class movement and became more and more malicious and subtle as the class struggle sharpened. Now that the world socialist system has scored outstanding successes and the influence of Marxist-Leninist ideology has grown immensely, anti-communism is resorting to all sorts of refined methods to vilify socialism. The anti-communists are falsifying the policies and aims of the Communists, slandering the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries, baiting progressive, peace-loving forces and insti-

¹ 23rd Congress of the C.P.S.U., pp. 145-46.

tutions and scaring the population of their countries with the so-called communist menace.

An interdependence exists between the achievements of socialist countries and the revolutionary struggle of the peoples in the capitalist and the newly free countries. Now no problem of the world working-class and national liberation movement can be examined in isolation from the development of the world socialist system, which is greatly influencing internal processes in other countries. Lenin's profound words that the socialist state influences the international revolution mainly by its economic policy have been fully corroborated today.

Of great significance for the further development of the national liberation struggle of the peoples against imperialism is the expansion of the economic, political and cultural co-operation of the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries with young national states. This co-operation strengthens their economy, helps them train their national specialists and in the final count reinforces peace and the right of peoples to freedom and independent development.

The successes of the revolutionary class and national liberation struggle of the working people, in their turn, help strengthen the positions of the socialist countries. The more persistent this struggle is, the stronger are the guarantees for peace, the more favourable becomes the world situation for the creative labour of the peoples of socialist countries and the swifter and better they are able to turn their plans into reality.

Chapter IV

THEORY OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

As we have shown in the preceding chapter, the life of society under the slave-owning, feudal and capitalist systems is an arena of irreconcilable class struggle which assumes its sharpest form when the relations of production cease to correspond to the productive forces and begin to act as a brake on their development, and the ruling class becomes a reactionary social force. Under these conditions the passive opposition of the oppressed classes gives way to active resistance, and spontaneous protest to more or less organised action. In reply to the state-organised coercion, with which the ruling classes defend the old social relations, the revolutionary classes are compelled also to resort to force. In other words, the class struggle attains maximum intensity and develops into a *social revolution*.

1. Social Revolution as an Upheaval in the Economic Basis and Superstructure of Society

The conflict between the relations of production and the growing productive forces forms the economic basis of social revolution. According to Marx's classical definition, the age of social revolution arrives when the relations of production cease to be forms of development of the productive forces and turn into their shackles. This conflict is resolved by social revolution, by breaking up the old relations of production and replacing them by new ones.

In the broad sense of the term, social revolution is a revolution in the whole system of social relations making up a given socio-economic formation. It therefore embraces both the economic basis of society and its superstructure.

Arising on the basis of the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production, social revolution is not confined to an upheaval in the economic system of society. The old system of political and legal relations is broken up and replaced by a new one. The old system of institutions, particularly political and legal, is destroyed and replaced by a new one. Revolutionary changes also take place in the spiritual life of society, above all in its ideological-political, legal, moral, religious, artistic and philosophical views, and also in the sphere of social psychology, the feelings and attitudes of various social groups. Revolutionary change takes a special form in each structural element of a socio-economic formation.

The fundamental problem of revolution is the problem of power since political power is the most important instrument for radically changing the whole system of social relations, its basis and superstructure. "The passing of state power from one *class* to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of that term."¹

Depending on the specific conditions, this passing of state power may assume various forms and entail the use of force in different measure. The application of force in a social revolution depends not on the fundamental essence of a revolution but on the means, on the manner in which it is carried out and on the conditions in which it takes place. It stands to reason, however, that every revolution presupposes overcoming the resistance of the moribund classes. It is this idea that is expressed in Marx's famous phrase that force is the midwife of every old society when it is pregnant with a new one.

The existence of a conflict between the new productive forces and the old relations of production is not enough to bring about a revolution, let alone to make it victorious. In other words, the economic basis of social revolution is not sufficient by itself. There must also be a certain combination of *objective* and *subjective* factors.

Indignation with the old system and readiness to destroy it mount among the broad masses of the people only

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 44.

when class oppression becomes intolerable, when the cup of popular discontent is filled to overflowing. Disorganisation and confusion appear in the ranks of the ruling class when it has involved itself in economic and political contradictions for which it can find no solution, when its economic and political might, due to certain objective reasons, has been seriously undermined. Both these circumstances arise independently of the will of men, of ideologists, political parties or individual classes. As a rule, they appear when the conflict between the old relations of production and the new productive forces and also the socio-economic contradictions that reflect this conflict have reached their maximum intensity, when the economic and political life of the country is gripped by an acute crisis. It is this nation-wide crisis, affecting both the exploiters and the exploited, embracing both economic and political activity, that is called a *revolutionary situation*.

According to Lenin, the following three major features are characteristic of a revolutionary situation: "(1) When it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the 'upper classes', a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for 'the lower classes not to want' to live in the old way; it is also necessary that 'the upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in 'peace time', but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the 'upper classes' themselves into independent historical action."¹

Political revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; but, as Lenin indicates, not every revolutionary situation leads to revolution, but only such a situation in which the objective conditions are supplemented by sub-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-14.

jective conditions, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to undertake mass revolutionary action. The subjective factor is both the level of class consciousness and organisation of the masses and the guidance of these masses by particular political organisations.

Inspired by revolutionary ideas, the progressive classes overthrow the reactionary political system and with the aid of the new state power abolish the old and establish new and more progressive relations of production.

The conversion of one socio-economic system into another does not end here, however. For a new social system to achieve complete victory, it must attain the highest level of labour productivity which the old system could have never attained. In other words, the new relations of production must rest on an adequate material and technical basis. As historical experience has shown, this material and technical basis is created by a revolution in the productive forces, in the course of which the new economic system acquires mature forms.

The industrial revolution which took place in Western Europe and America at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries is a characteristic example of such a leap in the development of the productive forces. This leap had paved the way for the transition from the manufactory to the industrial stage of capitalism. As a result of the industrial revolution the capitalist mode of production became firmly established and the capitalist system defeated the feudal system economically.

Social revolution *is a law of the development of class society*, of mankind's transition from an old to a new system. The destruction of a moribund and the birth of a new system constitutes a sharp turn in the course of the historical development of mankind. It embraces many peoples and countries and involves a more or less prolonged period of revolutionary upheavals.

The development of social revolutions in individual countries is characterised by many specific features. Besides the revolutions which deal the main and decisive blow to the obsolete system there may also be revolutions that only prepare the ground for this blow or, on the contrary, carry it to its logical conclusion.

Many modern sociologists and historians as a rule distort the concept of revolution. For some, revolution is an event, which, even if it does occur often, plays a very small creative role in history compared with the slow and gradual evolutionary development of society.

The evolutionary stage in the development of any given social system is undoubtedly a natural feature of development. As Marx said, however, the real "locomotives of history" in a society composed of antagonistic classes are always and everywhere the social revolutions. The periods of "peaceful evolution" which reformists represent as the only progressive periods in the history of society bear no comparison with the periods of revolution, in terms of their influence on the course and pace of social development.

Others regard revolution as something incidental, irregular in the life of society, as an event that may be avoided if there are sufficiently "wise and far-sighted" statesmen.

While condemning social revolution, which they claim is a fortuitous and undesirable departure from the "normal" evolutionary course of development of the "eternal" exploiting system, they spare no effort to advocate reforms. They regard reforms within the framework of the existing system as the only acceptable way of bringing about social changes.

In actual fact, however, socio-economic and political reforms are a by-product of revolution. The ruling exploiter classes carry out reforms not because they are particularly concerned about human progress, as their ideologists like to assert, but because they are pressured to do so by the revolutionary struggle of the exploited masses. The results of this struggle are consolidated by some socio-economic and political reforms. These reforms, of course, bring partial changes in the existing socio-economic and political system and improve the condition of the working people to an extent. But they do not and cannot solve the fundamental antagonistic contradictions between the hostile classes.

The idealistic conception of revolutions as fortuitous events in the history of certain people is also exploded by historical experience which shows that not a single socio-economic formation has ever given way to another without

revolution, and that revolution is a regularity of this transition.

In the contemporary epoch, the reactionaries find it extremely difficult to prove that revolutions are fortuitous events, what with the development of the world revolutionary process, the collapse of many moribund regimes and the growth of the national liberation movement. Some of them even pretend to be revolutionaries and present as "revolutions" the most obvious counter-revolutionary coups or the numerous military putsches in dependent countries.

It is characteristic that the words "revolution" and "revolutionary", which the ruling classes had once viewed with the greatest disapprobation, are now frequently used to embellish capitalism. They talk, for example, of "revolution of incomes" and "managerial revolution" in an effort to convince the masses that capitalism has stopped being capitalism and has acquired a different, "revolutionary" character. This, in effect, is indirect recognition of the great popularity which the concept of revolution has won among the masses in the present-day epoch.

Needless to say, when spoken by bourgeois ideologists the word "revolution" loses its true meaning and content.

Professor Asa Briggs of Britain in a report at the Fourth World Sociological Congress, held in Venice in September 1953, suggested defining the concept of revolution as follows: revolution is the replacement of the existing legitimate social order by means that exceed the limits of legality.

It is, of course, an undeniable fact that by destroying the old, obsolete socio-economic and political relations the revolution abolishes the corresponding legal institutions. But to confine the essence of revolution to this is to repudiate the difference in principle that exists between political revolutions and counter-revolutionary coups, to place them on one and the same level. To give a correct definition of the concept of revolution one must indicate that the legitimate order is abolished in the course of a revolution by progressive classes and that these classes have a historical right to launch a revolutionary offensive on the reactionary political order which has outlived itself.

Whereas political revolution means the transition of

power to the progressive class, counter-revolution, or a counter-revolutionary coup, means the overthrow of the political power of the progressive class and the restoration of the power of the reactionary class. An example of a counter-revolutionary coup may be found in the overthrow of Soviet power in Hungary in the summer of 1919 and of the popular democratic government in Spain in 1938. In each case the reactionary classes—the big bourgeoisie and landowners—regained their political and economic domination.

Revolution or counter-revolution, in the sense of replacement of the ruling class, should not be confused with the coup d'état. The latter does not affect the foundations of the political and economic supremacy of the class that holds power, and is carried out by some section or group within that class. As an example of a reactionary coup d'état we may take the fascist coups in Italy in 1922 and in Germany in 1933. These coups brought to power the most reactionary and chauvinist section of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

History shows us, however, examples of progressive coup d'états. Such coups quite often provide the initial impetus for more profound social changes which lead ultimately to revolutions.

Historical development knows various types of social revolutions that differ as regards character, motive forces the historical results and phases of their development. The *character* of a revolution is determined by what social contradictions it resolves, what socio-economic system it overthrows and what system it establishes in its place. The *motive forces* of a revolution are the classes that accomplish it. Among them there is always a class that is more mature politically and capable of leading the classes allied with it in the struggle for social revolution. This class becomes the leader of the revolution.

In the final analysis, all the specific features of various social revolutions are determined by socio-economic formations which replace one another as a result of their victory, and by historical periods in which these changes take place. We have, therefore, to examine consistently the peculiarities of the socio-economic transformations that have occurred at various stages of history.

2. First Types of Social Revolutions

Let us begin with the socio-economic and political transformations occurring during the transition from the primitive-communal to a class-antagonistic system.

This transition resulted from a conflict between the new productive forces and the primitive-communal relations of production. It stemmed from a revolutionary change in the productive forces and was unquestionably progressive.

Ancient Greece provides a classical example of a social revolution as a result of which the tribal system was replaced by the slave-owning society. This revolution in some parts of ancient Greece, as Engels pointed out, was in no way overshadowed by foreign conquest. It shows quite clearly how class society developed among unions of small tribes occupying an insignificant territory, particularly the union that embraced a small part of ancient Attica.

By the 7th century B.C. the tribal aristocracy of ancient Greece had become a ruling class of big slave-holding landowners. According to Aristotle, in the 7th century B.C. the majority of the population of ancient Attica was already enslaved by the minority. Enslavement by debt was widespread in the state of ancient Greece.

"The revolutionary struggle of the broad sections of population (*demos*, as the ancient Greeks called it)—traders, craftsmen, middle and small landowners—not only against the domination of the tribal aristocracy but also against enslavement by debt and various other forms of bondage of members of the tribe, constitutes the main line of historical development of Greece in the 8th to 6th centuries B.C."¹ The tribal nobility refused to relinquish its power voluntarily and desperately resisted the advance of the new forces. This struggle between the tribal aristocracy and the *demos* gave rise to a succession of revolutions. As a rule, they were accompanied by confiscation of the property of the aristocracy, redistribution of the land, annulment of debts, bloody reprisals by the victors against the defeated and mass exiles.

The social revolutions in the Greek states in the 7th-6th centuries B.C., which abolished the rule of the land-owning

¹ *World History*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1955, p. 657 (in Russian).

aristocracy, led to the final eradication of the survivals of the tribal system and to the formation in Greece of the ancient city-state—the *polis*. The class struggle during the establishment of the antagonistic society led to the seizure of political power by the class of slave-owners. Any social movement which in that period had as its aim the restoration of tribal, primitive-communal customs, was unquestionably reactionary.

As time passed, however, the slave-owning system itself was forced to alter its forms. Class contradictions ripened within it. As slave-owning grew and spread from one branch of social production to another, it inevitably dispossessed the small farmers, citizens of the *polis*, of their land, impoverished them and led to a concentration of land in the hands of the slave-owning upper stratum.

The small free proprietors stubbornly defended their right to existence. They rose against the big landowners and usurers. The popular movements that took place from time to time in various parts of the slave-owning world often compelled the ruling classes to carry out economic and political reforms to some extent reflecting the demands of the masses.

The social revolution in Italy that began with the Gracchi movement (late 2nd century B.C.) and continued right up to the Social War (early 1st century B.C.) for its after-effects was the most significant revolution against the big slave-holding landowners. Moreover, as Soviet historians have shown, there is every reason to believe that the Social War—a grandiose uprising of the Italian peasantry—was the highest stage of this revolution.

“What were the gains and results of this revolution? First, the Italian peasantry won the right to own land on equal conditions with the Romans. Secondly, the population of Italy acquired rights as Roman citizens.... The much more profound result of the revolution, however, was that it undermined the city-state organisation and city-state institutions, that it undermined the position of the ancient Roman aristocracy, in other words, it struck a crushing blow at the city-state of Rome.”¹ Thus, the revolution pre-

¹ S. L. Utchenko, *The Crisis and the Fall of the Roman Republic*, Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 1965, pp. 29-30 (in Russian).

pared the way for more mature forms of slave-owning relations, for the political system of the Roman Empire.

As slave-owning society developed there was a steady growth not only of antagonism among the free citizens but also of the main antagonism in the ancient world, the one between slaves and slave-owners. Torn away from their natural surroundings, deprived of the most rudimentary conditions of human life, these slaves coming from various tribes and speaking different languages were in very few cases able to unite and embark upon open struggle. But when they did rise, their struggle shook the very foundations of the entire slave system.

We are now confronted with the question of the relations between the uprisings of the slaves and the revolutionary movement of free peasants. This question particularly requires an answer if we remember that some of the biggest uprisings of slaves—the rebellions in Sicily and the great slave war under the leadership of Spartacus—took place during the period of the vast revolutionary movement of the Italian peasantry.

As Soviet historians showed, although both revolutionary movements—slave rebellions and the uprisings of the Italian peasants—were due to the same causes, the crisis of Rome as a city-state, each of the movements actually developed independently and did not merge together. The gap between the slaves and the free men (particularly the Roman citizens) was too great for them to be able to unite. The slaves were not yet capable of liberating themselves even by means of the most intense efforts. Since they were not a class that could create a more progressive mode of production and strove only for their personal liberation and not for the abolition of slavery in general, nor for the remaking of society on a new basis, they were unable to evolve a revolutionary programme capable of uniting the broad sections of the exploited people.

The Spartacus uprising occurred when the slave-owning society was still on the upgrade, and it was this that ultimately caused the political isolation of the slave rebellion. The situation changed abruptly when the slave system entered the stage of crisis in the 3rd-4th centuries A.D.

During the 3rd and 4th centuries a certain levelling of all categories of the dependent population took place in

the Roman Empire. As regards their socio-economic and legal position the free small landowners—the peasants—drew closer to the slaves. The leading figure in agricultural production in the latter period of the Roman Empire was the *colon*, i.e., formerly a free small landowner, now dependent both economically and legally on a big landowner. By reducing the free farmer to a position close to that of a slave, the slave system finally destroyed that formerly impassable barrier which had separated the peasant from the slave. The *colon* thus became the slave's natural ally, and the social basis on which the big slave-owners relied was considerably narrowed down. In the mass revolutionary popular uprisings in the latter period of the Roman Empire both the *colons* and the slaves came out in a united front.

“The only way of providing free development for the new forces was a revolutionary upheaval, a ‘radical revolution’, capable of finally burying slave-owning society and its still fairly powerful political superstructure. This revolutionary upheaval, however, could not be carried out only by the internal forces of Roman society. The popular revolutionary movements of the 3rd-5th centuries (the Bagaud and Agonistic movements) undoubtedly shook the foundations of the Roman Empire, but they were unable to overthrow it completely. This could only be accomplished by the combination of internal class struggle and the external factor provided by the invasion of Roman territory by ‘barbaric’ tribes.”¹ The fall of Rome was brought about by the combined action by the slaves and *colons*, on the one hand, and barbarian tribes, on the other, i.e., the social medium from which the ancient slave-owning world had for centuries recruited its slave labour force.

3. Bourgeois Anti-Feudal Revolutions

Just like the slave-owning system, the feudal socio-economic system passes through two big phases of development: upgrade and downgrade.

The history of its upgrade development records many mass revolutionary actions of the peasants and citizens

¹ *World History*, Vol. II, p. 817 (in Russian).

against the feudal class. In Europe, the peasant wars (the French *Jacquerie* in 1358, for example) and the citizens' wars (such as the so-called communal movement of medieval European cities) were sometimes waged over extensive territory and with great tenacity. On many occasions the peasants and the citizens joined forces in the struggle against the feudal lords, especially when they succeeded in rallying around a common ideological (usually religious-heretical) banner, as was the case in the south of France in the 12th-13th centuries (Albigensian wars) and in Bohemia in the first half of the 15th century (Hussite wars). When this took place, the struggle became protracted and vicious and was pregnant with dangerous consequences for the whole class of feudal lords, both secular and ecclesiastical.

But however fierce the peasants' revolutionary wars might have been, sooner or later they ended in failure. The efforts of the rebellious peasant masses, as a rule, did not and could not carry them beyond the framework of the feudal system. They only hoped that a good king, tsar or emperor would reduce the intensity of the feudal oppression. Tsarist illusions were so strongly embedded in the minds of people, that the leaders of peasant uprisings frequently proclaimed themselves tsars¹ and strove to lend the peasant revolutionary movement the familiar forms of feudal hierarchy. When the peasants succeeded in setting up more or less stable state formations—the most serious attempts were made in China during the peasant wars of 875-883, 1626-46 and 1850-64—the leaders of the revolts disclosed a tendency to degenerate into ordinary feudal lords. All this inevitably led to internal corruption, weakening, decline and defeat of the peasant wars.

In Europe of the Middle Ages, the citizens managed in the fight against their seigniors to achieve considerably greater successes than the peasants. Their revolts frequently culminated in complete victory. As a result of these victorious revolts or "communal revolutions", as historians call them, some towns, in Italy, for example, won economic and political independence; others, as was the case in

¹ Yemelyan Pugachev, the leader of the peasant uprising in Russia in 1774-75, called himself Emperor Peter III.

Germany, achieved the status of free cities while remaining in vassalage, nominal for the most part, to the German Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire; still others, in France, for instance, won the right to pay taxes and fulfil other duties only to the king retaining much of their independence in internal affairs. As a rule, however, the rebellious citizens did not even think of abolishing the feudal system as a whole. Their ambitions did not overstep the economic interests of the city in which they lived.

In the cities themselves, after they had won independence, the lower stratum—the artisans—frequently rose against the upper stratum of traders and usurers who had usurped all power and mercilessly exploited the city poor. But artisans' uprisings also did not exceed the bounds of the feudal system. They did not even think of abolishing the guild structure of the feudal city. Even if the craft guilds did win in the fight against the guilds of merchants and usurers, the rich upper stratum of the craft guilds once again formed an alliance with its erstwhile foes and betrayed the interests of the poorest sections of the population.

Thus, as long as feudal relations of production in both town and country corresponded in the main to the productive forces of society, the revolutionary actions of the urban and rural population could not bring downfall of the feudal system.

The situation changes radically with the rise of the capitalist mode of production. Its appearance indicates that the productive forces of society have entered into conflict with the feudal relations of production, that new social forces, hostile to the feudal system both in the country and in towns, namely, the bourgeoisie and proletariat, have emerged on the historical scene. The era of the bourgeois anti-feudal revolution begins with the rise of the capitalist mode of production.

For the whole of mankind this era began at the turn of the 16th century. As regards individual countries, owing to their uneven economic and political development, the era of the bourgeois revolution began at different times.

A major characteristic feature of the first bourgeois revolutions—the Netherlands (1566-1609), the English (1641-53), the American (1775-83) and the French (1789-94)—

was that the capitalist mode of production in these countries rested on the manufactory whose technical basis differed little from that of craft guild production. It is not accidental, therefore, but perfectly natural that the leader of the early bourgeois revolutions was the bourgeoisie, that the proletariat's demands could not seriously influence the course or the outcome of the revolution and that the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie was the politically dominating strata of the working people.

Each bourgeois revolution had its own correlation of class forces.

It is known, for example, that the forces behind the English revolution in the middle of the 17th century included not only the bourgeoisie but also the part of the English nobility which had turned bourgeois. It was due to this circumstance that such a major issue of the revolution as the agrarian question was solved in favour of the landlords and not the peasants. The English bourgeoisie betrayed the interests of its most loyal ally which bore the main burden of the revolutionary struggle. After the victory of the revolution the peasants were dispossessed of their land with such speed that at the turn of the 19th century they practically ceased to exist as a class.

It was the opposite case in France, where by the end of the 18th century only an extremely insignificant section of the nobility had turned bourgeois. The French nobility derived the means for its parasitical existence not only by direct exploitation of the peasants but also by confiscating the lion's share of the profits of the bourgeoisie through taxation. The bourgeoisie tolerated being robbed in broad daylight so long as the king fought against the separatist ambitions of some feudal lords, so long as his protectionist policy promised it slow but sure enrichment. Yet as soon as the danger of feudal internecine strife became a thing of the past for the bourgeoisie and the protectionism of the king no longer satisfied its wolfish appetite, it demanded political power for itself. But because the class of landowners and its state vigorously resisted the bourgeoisie, which by itself was unable to cope with the landowners, it could do nothing else but to appeal to the working classes. The French bourgeoisie gave up its long-

standing alliance with the class of the landowners for an alliance with the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie. The revolution which was led by the French bourgeoisie completely demolished the feudal system in both town and country, and the agrarian problem in France was solved in favour of the peasants.

It should be stressed that the bourgeoisie is by no means always capable of forming an alliance with the working masses for the purpose of carrying through an anti-feudal revolution, i.e., a revolution that clears the way for capitalist development. The German bourgeoisie at the beginning of the 16th century was unable to rise to the level of understanding its national interests and did not furnish any substantial support to the revolutionary peasants, thus sealing the doom of the first anti-feudal revolution in Germany. As a result of the betrayal by the bourgeoisie, Germany for a long time remained politically divided, which had an extremely negative effect on the country's economic development.

In subsequent anti-feudal revolutions, the bourgeoisie likewise remained revolutionary only to the extent required by its selfish class interests. The big French bourgeoisie, for example, having achieved the fulfilment of its immediate political and socio-economic programme, furnished maximum assistance to the class of landowners in their efforts to stamp out the flames of the peasant war. It was only due to the unprecedented scale of the revolutionary struggle of the popular masses that the treacherous plans of the big bourgeoisie were frustrated and the revolution developed much further than originally intended. In this connection Engels underlined a major regularity of bourgeois revolution: "In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further..."¹

In Germany in 1848-49, as a result of the absence of a mass anti-feudal peasant movement and the weakness of the proletarian movement in towns, the revolutionary forces were too small to curb the cowardice and vacillation of the bourgeoisie. Fearing that the proletariat may seize

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 105.

bourgeois private property, the German bourgeoisie rapidly lost its revolutionary spirit and formed an alliance with the landowner class, its recent foe. As a result of this betrayal, the German revolution of 1848-49 was defeated, and the key issue of the revolution—the national reunification of Germany—remained unsolved.

In the epoch of imperialism considerable changes occur in the correlation of class forces in the capitalist countries where the tasks of the anti-feudal bourgeois revolution have not yet been solved. Thus, the experience of the popular revolution of 1905-07 in Russia showed that in a bourgeois-democratic revolution the monopoly bourgeoisie takes up counter-revolutionary positions and becomes an ally of the landowner class. The proletariat and the peasantry are the motive force of such a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It is led by the working class which is interested in sweeping away as many survivals of serfdom as possible from both the economic and political spheres. Because of this the bourgeois-democratic revolution in capitalist countries in the epoch of imperialism essentially differs from the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the epoch of industrial capitalism which was led by the bourgeoisie. But in the colonial and dependent countries, as will be shown later, the national bourgeoisie is still capable of being a revolutionary force despite its inherent vacillation and instability.

Anti-feudal revolutions are divided into bourgeois revolutions (at the top) and bourgeois-democratic (people's) revolutions, depending on the degree of participation of the working people in them. The first include revolutions in which the bourgeoisie achieves its goals without the active participation of the peasants and workers. The second include revolutions in which the popular masses—the working class and the peasants—exert a considerable influence on their course and outcome. Because the degree of participation of the popular masses in various bourgeois revolutions is not the same, they can range from revolutions at the top to people's revolutions. In his work *The State and Revolution*, Lenin cites the examples of the Turkish (1908) and the Portuguese (1910) revolutions as revolutions at the top, and the Russian revolution of 1905 as a people's revolu-

tion. But these are two extreme points, two poles, between which the overwhelming majority of all bourgeois revolutions are ranged. Even the Turkish and Portuguese revolutions were carried out with the people's participation, although without much "noticeable" action on their part; here the people's anti-feudal movement merely provided the background for a political bourgeois coup.

Of no small interest is the attitude of the bourgeois revolution to the feudal state apparatus, to the military-bureaucratic machinery of absolutism. History shows that since the bourgeois revolution does not abolish class exploitation, it does not set itself the task of changing the state apparatus of the landowner class. In the course of the revolution the bourgeoisie as a rule strives to seize the absolutist military-bureaucratic machinery, to adapt it to its own needs and improve it. But the concrete forms of solving this task depend on whether the bourgeois revolution is carried out at the top or whether it is a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Naturally, the more active the participation of the masses in it, the more vigorously the rubbish of feudal statehood is swept onto the trash pile of history.

Many bourgeois revolutions took the form of national liberation wars: the Netherlands Revolution at the close of the 16th century against Spanish domination—the first victorious bourgeois revolution; the American revolution at the close of the 18th century against English domination; the Latin American revolutions of the 19th century against Spanish and Portuguese rule; the Italian and Hungarian revolutions against Austrian tyranny; the revolutions in South-East Europe in the 19th century against Turkish domination. The aim of most of these national liberation revolutions was to achieve freedom from foreign feudal oppression. But one of the earlier bourgeois national liberation revolutions—the American Revolution—was already aimed at throwing off the yoke of foreign capital, the yoke of the English bourgeoisie. As the capitalist countries furthered their colonial expansion, the greater became the share of anti-imperialist revolutions, i.e., revolutions spearheaded against the political and economic domination of foreign monopoly capital, in the total number of the national liberation revolutions.

4. Proletarian, Socialist Revolution

The social revolution of the proletariat has a number of features fundamentally distinguishing it from all the preceding types of social revolutions, particularly the bourgeois revolution. All revolutions in human history prior to the Great October Socialist Revolution, including even the great bourgeois revolutions, possessed an internal contradiction: the overthrow of a certain form of exploitation, signifying the victory of the working masses over their exploiters, turned into a victory of a new form of exploitation, and consequently the subjugation of the working masses to a new class of exploiters. In contrast to them *the socialist revolution abolishes all exploitation.*

Another important distinction of the socialist from the bourgeois revolution is that it is not preceded by the spontaneous emergence of a socialist mode of production in the bosom of capitalism, whereas the bourgeois revolution is preceded by the formation of a capitalist mode of production while the feudal mode of production still predominates. Within the framework of capitalism there arise only the material conditions for the socialist mode of production, namely, the productive forces that have a social character and the technical basis of which is large-scale machine industry. Therefore, the proletariat, the working masses cannot set themselves the limited task which the bourgeoisie sets itself in the anti-feudal revolution. The bourgeois revolution is restricted to seizing political power which it uses to convert the already existing capitalist economy into the predominant mode of production; the proletarian revolution does not end but begins with the seizure of political power.

In order to convert capitalist property into socialist property and private property into the basically different, social property, it is essential first to carry out a political revolution, to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and establish the political rule of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and then to use it to abolish private property and introduce collective, social ownership of the means of production.

For this reason capitalism and socialism are separated by a more or less prolonged historical period of revolution-

any conversion of the former into the latter, a transitional period in which the socialist relations of production corresponding to the social productive forces are created in a bitter class struggle. This whole period is a period of socialist revolution, when a fundamental transformation of the political, economic and cultural life of society takes place. A purely evolutionary transition, without any revolution, from capitalism to socialism is impossible.

At the turn of the 20th century the capitalist system entered the final stage of its development—imperialism. Capitalism began to decline, and the progressive social forces were thus confronted with the immediate and practical task of overthrowing its rule. Imperialism is the eve of socialist revolution.

Imperialism changes the conditions of socialist revolution in many ways. It imparts to the uneven economic and political development of the capitalist countries an extremely spasmodic and conflicting character, with the result that the economic and political prerequisites of the proletarian revolution in various countries ripen at different times. It is only natural, therefore, that such countries fall away from the world system of capitalism at different times.

In the 20th century, when the internal and external contradictions among the capitalist countries have deepened and the positions of capitalism as a whole have been seriously impaired, there arose, as Lenin pointed out, *the possibility of the victory of socialist revolution first in several countries, or even in one country, taken separately*. Moreover, the weakest link in the chain of imperialism, i.e., the country which objectively is ripe for the victory of socialist revolution, may not necessarily be the country with a higher level of economic development. It could sooner be a country that represents a knot of imperialist contradictions, in which all the principal socio-economic contradictions of imperialism have become most acute. In such countries the extreme sharpening of social contradictions fosters a high degree of revolutionary consciousness among the masses and creates the objective preconditions for the overthrow of the economic and political rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

A socialist revolution may spring from diverse revolutionary movements aimed against imperialism. For example, in a number of countries which have already covered a certain distance along the capitalist road of development socialist revolutions are preceded by anti-feudal bourgeois-democratic revolutions, i.e., revolutions designed to eliminate the survivals of feudalism in the economic and political system. Moreover, these revolutions may acquire an anti-imperialist character.

Under conditions when the world capitalist system as a whole has matured for socialist revolution, when the peasantry is acting as an ally of the proletariat in the struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie, the proletariat is able, as soon as the tasks of bourgeois-democratic revolution are completed, to tackle the tasks of the socialist revolution.

In the capitalist countries where feudalism has been done away with socialist revolutions may be preceded by another kind of democratic revolutions, namely, the anti-monopoly democratic revolutions.

The contemporary stage of the general crisis of capitalism is characterised by a sharp intensification of state-monopoly tendencies. This leads to an unprecedented aggravation of the contradiction between the masses, on the one hand, and the combined forces of the monopolies and the state, on the other. Headed by the Communist and Workers' Parties, the proletariat directs its main blow against the system of state-monopoly capitalism. Today the struggle of the proletariat against the financial oligarchy and its state is winning the growing support of the peasants, the urban middle strata and the intellectuals, i.e., all those social groups of the contemporary bourgeois society against whom the monopolies have tremendously increased their economic and political oppression in the past half century. The social basis of the revolutionary working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries has vastly grown, as has the tendency to set up a united front of progressive forces against the capitalist monopolies.

Under the new historical conditions the question of the correlation between *revolution* and *reforms* acquires particular significance in the developed capitalist countries. Decisively turning down the opportunist theories and

practice of modern reformism, Marxist-Leninist parties are at the same time consistently fighting for democratic reforms and for improving the political and economic conditions of the working people. But, as Lenin had stressed, "unlike the opportunists and reformists, *we do not confine ourselves* to the struggle for reforms, but *subordinate* it to the struggle for revolution".¹ One of the main demands of the proletariat is nationalisation of key branches of economy and democratisation of their management. The general democratic anti-monopoly struggle does not put off the socialist revolution, but, on the contrary, brings it closer. Today opportunities are opening up before the working class and its allies in some countries for carrying through changes that transcend the limits of ordinary reforms and which are vital for the majority of the nation. "Communists regard the struggle for democracy," it is written down in the Statement of the 1960 Moscow Meeting, "as a component of the struggle for socialism. In this struggle they continuously strengthen the bonds with the masses, increase their political consciousness and help them understand the tasks of the socialist revolution and realise the necessity of accomplishing it."²

Today, in view of a serious regrouping of class forces and a growing powerful democratic movement against the dictatorship of the monopolies it becomes objectively possible in a number of developed capitalist countries to carry out an anti-monopoly people's revolution or to pass through the anti-monopoly stage of the revolution, which may lead to the establishment of a broadest democratic coalition headed by the working class. If a democratic anti-monopoly people's rule is set up, there is a possibility that the anti-monopoly democratic revolution of the masses will relatively rapidly develop into a socialist revolution of the working class.

One of the most important types of democratic revolutions in the epoch of imperialism, all the more so in the contemporary period, are the *national liberation revolutions* in the countries oppressed by imperialism. Since not only

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 224.

² *The Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism*, Moscow, pp. 69-70.

the feudal landowners but also the compradore bourgeoisie, in alliance with the monopoly capital of the metropolies, defend the survivals of serfdom in the colonial and dependent countries, the revolutions there inevitably become anti-imperialist as well as anti-feudal.

The national liberation movement in the countries with an established and developing capitalist mode of production is a scene of bitter political struggle for leadership between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie. The national liberation revolution there, even if accomplished under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie which does not and cannot aim at moving toward socialism, is an ally of the world socialist revolution in the struggle against imperialism. But owing to its dual social nature, the national bourgeoisie is subject to political vacillation both inside the country and in the world arena. Having as its ultimate goal the establishment of economic domination, it takes every step to prevent the revolutionary struggle of the masses from going beyond the limits of those demands that are acceptable to it.

The proletariat opposes the inconsistency of the national bourgeoisie in the struggle against imperialism and feudalism and works actively for the creation of a broad national front, for a firm alliance with the peasants—the basis of this front—and for a non-capitalist path of development.

Under contemporary conditions a national liberation revolution if it is conducted with the utmost resoluteness and consistency tends to develop from anti-imperialist into a socialist revolution. Such a revolution passes through two basic stages in its development. In the first stage it overthrows the political rule of the foreign imperialist bourgeoisie and its hirelings among the local feudal or tribal upper stratum and wins national independence. By itself political independence is inadequate if it is not bolstered by economic independence. The ideologists of imperialism, Lenin pointed out, usually talk about “*national liberation . . . leaving out economic liberation*. Yet in reality it is the latter that is the chief thing”.¹ The essence of the policy of neo-colonialism is to prevent the newly

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 398.

established sovereign states from developing their own national economy, primarily industry, and thus securely tie them to the world economic and political system of capitalism.

It is not accidental but absolutely natural, therefore, that the national liberation revolution does not end with the achievement of political independence, but passes into the second, decisive stage in which the economic oppression of the imperialists is abolished. Industrialisation is the only way to surmount age-old economic dependence and backwardness and to create a highly developed national economy. To achieve this task persistent and prolonged efforts of the whole nation are required. But its fulfilment can be accelerated by establishing a state sector of economy and effectuating a radical agrarian reform. Economic independence, like political independence, can be achieved only in a bitter struggle against imperialism and internal reactionary forces.

Today the newly free countries face the choice of two paths of development. International and domestic reactionaries endeavour to channel the development of these countries along capitalist lines. They are trying to convert the state industrial sector into an appendage of the private-capitalist mode of production and resort to palliative measures rather than radically solve the agrarian problem. But history shows that the capitalist road of development for the newly free countries brings ruin to the peasants, mass unemployment to the proletariat and untold suffering to the whole people.

The progressive forces are showing the peoples of these countries another road of development, one that has been tested in practice by the Soviet Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan and the Mongolian People's Republic and which has produced brilliant results. It is common knowledge that the Central Asian peoples needed a relatively short time to rise from the darkness of the Middle Ages to the heights of civilisation and far surpass the capitalist countries of Asia, with whom they were practically at the same level of development before the October Revolution, both economically and culturally. This striking leap is explained by the fact that assisted by the Russian working class they passed from feudalism to socialism

without going through the capitalist stage of development.

The *non-capitalist road of development* becomes possible for the countries that have shaken off colonial dependence provided they establish a firm alliance with the socialist countries which furnish them all-round military-political and economic assistance. Indicative in this respect is the Mongolian People's Republic with its 40 years' experience of non-capitalist development, during which it rose from feudalism to socialism with the direct assistance of the Soviet Union.

Countries may embark on the path of non-capitalist development not only under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist parties but also under the leadership of revolutionary-democratic parties, if they have no Marxist-Leninist parties or if these parties do not enjoy the necessary influence. As the anti-imperialist democratic revolution develops into socialist revolution, the members of the revolutionary-democratic parties assimilate Marxist-Leninist ideology, i.e., the ideology of the working class, and their actions as a whole fall more and more in line with the interests of the proletariat, as was the case in Cuba, for example, where in the course of struggle the revolutionary democrats rallied under the banner of scientific communism.

Taking into account the particular ways in which various countries fall away from the world capitalist system, it can be said that the world socialist revolution is made up of heterogeneous revolutionary movements, primarily proletarian and national liberation and anti-imperialist revolutions.

Revolutions with identical content may assume diverse *forms* depending on the situation in a particular country, but in the long run they fall into two basic ones: mass action involving the use of armed forms of struggle, and mass action without the use of arms. If the proletariat resorts to the first form to win power the revolution will follow a *non-peaceful* path, if the second form is employed it will be a *peaceful* path.

The choice of the form in which the proletariat employs revolutionary coercion depends ultimately not on its own will but on the situation arising in the period of the immediate revolutionary situation, on the balance of forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the

revolution and counter-revolution inside a country and in the world.

The contemporary epoch is characterised by an accelerated growth of the forces of the socialist system, on the one hand, and a progressing decline of the world capitalist system, on the other, and as a result of this a colossal increase in the revolutionary proletarian and national liberation movements. Under these conditions the possibility of the proletariat coming to power peacefully, without civil war in some countries is not ruled out. It is quite certain, for example, that in the event of the victory of the anti-monopoly democratic revolution led by the proletariat, there are greater possibilities for going over to the socialist revolution by peaceful means. In each individual case, however, the question of whether the proletariat will assume power by peaceful or non-peaceful means is concretely decided depending on the existing situation and the correlation of class forces in the period of the immediate revolutionary situation.

Marxists do not link up their political strategy with any particular form of winning power. The task of the Communists is to master all forms and methods of struggle and to be able to use them at the right moment depending on how the political conditions change.

Whatever the path of socialist revolution, peaceful or otherwise, the proletariat must seize power and establish its own proletarian state. As Lenin said, only he is a Marxist who carries the recognition of class struggle to the point of recognising the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is set up as a result of the break-up of the bourgeois military-bureaucratic apparatus.

The destruction of the old bourgeois military-bureaucratic machinery, i.e., the apparatus for suppressing the working people, above all the army, police and the intelligence service, is essential for the victory of the proletarian revolution. This also constitutes an important distinction between the proletarian and the bourgeois revolution. Having come to power, the capitalist class usually strives to adapt the military-bureaucratic machinery, created by the landowner class, to its own needs. It succeeds in doing so because the exploiter nature of the bourgeois state is akin to that of the feudal state. But when

the proletariat takes over power it cannot use the old military-bureaucratic apparatus adapted to holding down the masses; it has to destroy it. As regards the part of the bourgeois state machinery which in one or another degree fulfils economic and social functions (management of the state sector of economy, public health, education, social insurance, and so forth), it naturally should not be destroyed but radically reorganised, severed from the bourgeoisie and made to serve the people. What methods are employed to break up the military-bureaucratic machinery and to reorganise the administrative apparatus dealing with economy, public health, etc., depends on the correlation of class forces inside a country and in the world. To be able to fulfil the tasks of a socialist revolution the proletariat must create its own machinery of state capable of ruthlessly crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie and at the same time ensuring successful socialist construction. Its basic element is the apparatus called upon to fulfil economic and organisational, social and cultural and educational functions.

5. Socialist Revolution as a World Revolutionary Process

The rise and development of the world imperialist system uniting into a single whole the economies of individual countries have paved the way for the fusion of the revolutionary movement in different countries into a common anti-imperialist front.

Since the victories of the proletarian revolutions in various countries take place at different times, the transition from capitalism to socialism all over the world must inevitably embrace a whole historical epoch. This epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism is the epoch of socialist and national liberation revolutions. Despite the fact that revolutions in various countries take place at different times, they merge into a *single world-wide revolutionary process*. This process is composed of movements that differ from one another in social content: the socialist, the proletarian, the revolutionary-democratic, the peasant, the general democratic anti-war and the national liberation, and the anti-imperialist.

Having such a complex composition and embracing revolutions occurring at different times, the world revolutionary process passes through several stages of development.

It begins, as Lenin foresaw, with the falling away of one or several countries from the capitalist system. It was the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia that inaugurated the present epoch, the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, the epoch of successive falling away of ever more countries from the capitalist system, the epoch of struggle between the two opposing world systems, capitalist and socialist.

Thanks to the existence of the socialist system the possibility of breaking the imperialist chain and of fresh countries falling away from the capitalist system now depends not only on the degree of intensity of the contradictions of imperialism in these countries and on the degree to which the imperialist chain as a whole is weakened but also on the correlation of class forces throughout the world.

As historical experience showed, the falling away of a number of European and Asian countries from the world capitalist system in the course of and after the Second World War was considerably facilitated by the mutual support of the internal revolutionary forces and the forces of the world's first socialist state.

The Soviet Union, as a great socialist power, is an active factor in weakening the imperialist chain as a whole. At the same time, it has rendered the peoples of a number of European and Asian countries direct assistance in their struggle against nazi occupation and after their liberation prevented the British and American imperialists from exporting counter-revolution to these countries by force of arms. In the post-war period, the Soviet Union and the new socialist states formed the world socialist system.

In the present epoch, the world revolutionary process includes the efforts of the socialist countries to complete the building of socialism and, in the Soviet Union, to build communism; the struggle of the working class in the developed capitalist countries against monopoly capital and for the victory of socialist revolution; the struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples against imperialism

for national liberation. The peoples of the socialist countries, the working class in the developed capitalist countries and the oppressed, dependent nations are all confronted by a common enemy—imperialism. Therefore the establishment of a firm alliance between these three principal revolutionary forces of modern times is fully in line with their common interests.

The leading role in the world revolutionary process is played by the international proletariat and its main offspring—the world socialist system. The national liberation movement can gain complete success only with the support of these forces, with the support of the socialist community.

The final victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., the growth of its economic and military-political potential, as well as the might of all socialist countries accelerate the world revolutionary process. Thanks to the strengthening of the world socialist system the geographical remoteness of the small countries has ceased to be an insuperable obstacle for their peoples struggling to break away from the capitalist system. It is no longer an insurmountable barrier to socialist revolution. This is proved by the victory of the national liberation anti-imperialist and, subsequently, the socialist revolution in Cuba.

The Marxist-Leninist teaching on socialist revolution as a world revolutionary process is confirmed by life itself, and enriches itself with new conclusions and propositions at every stage of development. This revolutionary teaching cannot be shaken by any ideological attacks of reformists, revisionists and dogmatists.

Modern reformists assert that the working class, the working people do not have to seize power, that capitalism will develop into democratic socialism by itself, without revolutionary upheavals and class struggle. John Strachey, for example, in his book, *The Contemporary Capitalism*, even substitutes for the sociological term “revolution” the biological term “mutation”, to emphasise the absolutely peaceful and spontaneous nature of the changes at present taking place in capitalist society.

In the meanwhile the current scientific and technical revolution aggravates all the contradictions of state-monopoly capitalism. Life gives no grounds for portraying

things as though the "classical, exploiting capitalism" has given way to the so-called people's capitalism, let alone "democratic socialism". State-monopoly capitalism is a profoundly reactionary economic system. The most reactionary fascist-type regimes spring up on the soil of state-monopoly capitalism.

"All in all," the C.P.S.U. Programme says, "capitalism is increasingly impeding the development of the contemporary productive forces. Mankind is entering the period of a scientific and technical revolution bound up with the conquest of nuclear energy, space exploration, the development of chemistry, automation and other major achievements of science and engineering. But the relations of production under capitalism are much too narrow for a scientific and technical revolution. Socialism alone is capable of effecting it and of applying its fruits in the interests of society."¹

It is characteristic of the reformists to repudiate social-revolution as a means of struggle for socialism. All the countries of the world, they claim, will arrive at socialism by only one road, the road of gradual "transformation" of capitalism into socialism.

The harm caused by this Right-wing socialist theory of social "transformation" is obvious: it sows dangerous illusions in the working class, the proletariat; it dulls its revolutionary consciousness and disorganises its militant forces in the struggle for the victory of socialism. At the same time, this theory discloses the capitulatory position of the leaders of Right-wing Social-Democracy with regard to capitalism, their withdrawal from the struggle against capitalism and their desertion to the position of bourgeois reformism and liberalism.

As for the revisionists in the communist movement, they borrow the basic ideas of the reformists, embellish them slightly with Marxist-Leninist terminology and present them as a creative contribution to the theory of social-revolution. They assert that the question "who will beat whom" now no longer stands as it used to stand immediately after the victory of the October Revolution. Socialism is now developing in the capitalist countries them-

¹ *The Road to Communism*, p. 472.

selves. Nowadays, the revisionists claim, there are no purely capitalist countries, there are only countries where capitalists are still in power, while in the economy and other spheres of life there are more or less developed socialist elements. As a typical example the revisionists cite the Scandinavian countries.

It is not hard to see that this is only a variation of the old reformist theory of the peaceful growing over of capitalism into socialism throughout the world, which has long since demonstrated its untenability. Suffice it to say that the supporters of such theories have frequently held power in various countries, including the Scandinavian countries, but this has never led to the establishment of socialism.

Marxism-Leninism has to fight not only against revisionist distortion of the theory of world revolution but also against Left-wing sectarian dogmatism. It is typical of the Left-wing sectarians to deny the peaceful coexistence of states of the two opposing systems as a condition favouring the further development of the world socialist revolution. They regard the world socialist revolution not as a process in which one country after another falls away from the capitalist system but as a permanent world revolutionary conflagration. The line which the dogmatists seek to impose upon the world communist movement is one of repudiating the policy of the peaceful coexistence of the states of the two systems, a line of pushing the revolution by means of war, a line of exporting revolution. But such a line is completely at variance with Marxism which "has always been opposed to 'pushing' revolutions, which develop with the growing acuteness of class antagonisms that engender revolutions".¹

A correct understanding of the development of the revolutionary process is inseparably connected with the recognition of the contradiction between the two world systems as the main contradiction of the present epoch. The struggle of the two systems, the socialist and the capitalist, is a class struggle. The peoples of socialist countries are the advance detachment of the world revolutionary process. As the most powerful country of the

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 71-72.

socialist community, the Soviet Union is bearing the brunt of the struggle against imperialism. The imperialist export of counter-revolution is prevented mainly thanks to the Soviet Union's strength.

The attempts to present the contradiction between imperialism and the national liberation movement as the main contradiction of the present epoch are absolutely groundless.

This interpretation of the main contradiction of the present epoch belittles the significance of the world socialist system, its leading role in the contemporary world revolutionary process and the significance of the prospect of socialism in the national liberation movement. To reason in this way means to steer a course towards cutting off the national liberation movement from the world socialist system, which may seriously endanger the development of this movement.

To substantiate their chauvinistic and nationalistic claims Mao Tse-tung and his group advance the thesis that the centre of the present-day revolutionary movement is shifting to the regions of the national liberation struggle which constitute the "world countryside" that is destined to encircle the "world town". This thesis belittles the role played by the working class and its historic mission as the principal force that will lead mankind to socialism.

The Marxist-Leninist theory of socialist revolution teaches us to fight for the unity of all anti-imperialist forces, for merging the efforts of the peoples of socialist countries, the international proletariat and the national liberation movement into a single revolutionary torrent. This line, which has been thoroughly tested by experience, in practice, indicates the path of struggle for the overthrow of imperialism, for the triumph of socialism throughout the world.

Chapter V

PROBLEMS OF THE STATE

An enormous role in the life of a class society is played by its political organisation. This political organisation is formed on the basis of society's economic system and expresses the interests of definite classes. Only by analysing the economic system and the class structure of society is it possible to understand the essence of the state, the content of the struggle by the political parties and to obtain a key to an explanation of the political life of society.

1. The Origin of the State. The Essence of the Exploiting State

In defining what a state is, priority is very often given to the fact that it is an organisation of authority. Unquestionably, a state presupposes a distinct authority, but the whole thing is what kind of authority. Like all phenomena, authority in society is historical in character. It is wrong, for example, to confuse social authority in the primitive-communal system, state authority in a society divided into exploiting and exploited classes, state authority of the working people, and, finally, the social authority that will be at the highest phase of communism. The state and authority are different things. No society can exist without authority, but the existence of the state is connected only with definite phases in social development, namely, with society's division into classes. The state arose as a natural consequence of the disintegration of the primitive-communal system and the division of society into hostile classes. Just as naturally will it disappear as a result of the building of a classless communist society.

The form of social organisation that preceded the state was the clan or tribal commune, i.e., a body of blood kindred. The clan, however, was not based solely on natural kinship. It was primarily an economic organisation, which presupposed collective production and consumption. The highest organ of authority of the tribal commune was the general assembly of all its adult members. All social posts were elective. A union of clans formed a tribe which was controlled by a council of elders of all the clans belonging to that tribe. The oldest of these elders was the chief of the tribe.

The replacement of the tribal organisation of society by a state organisation, in the final analysis, was due to the development of production, which led to the emergence of private ownership and antagonistic classes. The collapse of the tribal commune as a producers' collective and a social organisation brought fundamental changes in the tribe itself. From a union of clans it gradually turned into a purely political union of neighbouring communes on a territorial basis. In these new conditions the formerly elective posts were taken over by the large and rich families of the more prosperous clans. As the commune disintegrated and its members turned into private producers, the power of the tribal chiefs increased and became more and more independent.

The collapse of the gentile commune as a result of increasing inequality of the property status of its members produced serious changes not only within the tribe itself but also in the relations between different tribes. In the new historical conditions, Engels wrote, "war and organisation for war were now regular functions of the life of the people"¹. In their turn, the predatory wars that were waged for the purpose of seizing the riches of other tribes and slaves became a powerful supplementary factor stimulating the process of class formation and the establishment of state authority separated from the people.

The organisation of social authority in the period of the disintegration of the primitive-communal system and the emergence of class society took the form of military democracy. Under it the popular assemblies were no longer

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 313.

assemblies of all members of a clan possessing equal rights, but assemblies of men warriors. It was the war chief, the tribal council and the chief's warriors that played the leading role in them.

In the period of military democracy the organs of gentile self-government became the objects of sharp struggle. Various groups of the gentile, military and religious nobility took part in this vicious fight for power, and the assembly of the armed people gradually lost its significance as the supreme organ of authority. The gentile aristocracy appropriated the monopoly right to occupy all social posts. When society split up into classes, the gentile councils became organs of the dictatorship of the propertied class. The tribal chief isolated himself more and more from the people, and thanks to his personal body of warriors became independent of the popular assembly, too. His warriors turned into a special, permanently operating military detachment with whose support the gentile nobility could impose its will on the other members of their tribe.

"In this manner," wrote Engels, "the organs of the gentile constitution were gradually torn from their roots in the people, in gens, phratry and tribe, and the whole gentile order was transformed into its opposite: from an organisation of tribes for the free administration of their own affairs, it became an organisation for plundering and oppressing their neighbours; and correspondingly its organs were transformed from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for ruling and oppressing their own people."¹

Thus the state emerges as a body or institution for preserving and defending the privileges of the ruling social groups and for the subjugation and oppression of the people whom these groups exploit. Consequently, it emerges as an instrument of class domination, as a political organisation of the ruling, exploiting class.

The state has two basic characteristics. The first is the *territorial principle* of organisation of the population and its relation to the social authority; the second is the existence of the *public authority*, i.e., a social authority that

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 313-14.

is not immediately identical with the entire population.

It must be stressed that the first characteristic does not mean that the subjects are merely divided into territorial units; it is a territorial principle of subordinating the population to the authority. The division of the population according to territory, generally speaking, also existed under tribal organisation. The relations between the population and the social authority, however, were not based on the territorial principle, which then played merely a secondary role, but on the principle of kinship. Under the state organisation, however, the territorial principle becomes the primary one, while the principle of kinship is secondary, subordinate, although it can play a certain part (in family relations, matters of inheritance, etc.).

The public authority, which exists under a class, state organisation of society, is defined by the following essential characteristics:

(a) the existence of a special category of people whose chief or sole vocation is the management of social affairs. This group of people constitutes the apparatus of government;

(b) the existence of a special apparatus of coercion, an apparatus for exerting compulsion over the will of other people. This apparatus consists of special detachments of armed men, i.e., army, gendarmerie, police, and a system of punitive organs, prisons, courts and similar institutions;

(c) the collection of material resources from the population in the form of taxes, etc., for the upkeep of the apparatus of government and coercion.

These features of public authority disclose the fact that authority in a class society is not immediately identical with the population, nor is it an organisation of public self-administration.

State authority defends the most general interests of the ruling class forming the basis of its existence and development. Writing of the bourgeois state, Engels noted that it was necessary "in order to support the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists".¹ Without a certain amount of in-

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1962, p. 382.

dependence with regard to individual representatives of the ruling class the state simply could not fulfil its tasks.

The state subjugates the will of the citizens to that of the ruling class with the help of a special apparatus capable of enforcing the observance of its instructions. Only the state elevates the will of the ruling class to a law, embodying it in a system of legal norms.

Sociology and jurisprudence have suggested very many definitions of the state which in one way or another conceal the true nature of the exploiting state, presenting it as an instrument operating in the interests of the whole nation. Hence the state is defined as an "organisation for the maintenance of law and order", "a body for governing the country", "a system of regulating life" and so on. All such definitions concentrate only on the external aspects of the state and obscure its internal class essence.

Let us take, for example, the definition proposed by the British sociologist and student of statehood, G.C. Field. He says that the state is a "territorial society, i.e., the people 'living on a particular tract of land' organised under a common governing body which has, if not a complete, at any rate a very special degree of authority over them."¹

Obviously no state can exist without territory, any more than it can exist without population, for territory and population are essential material conditions for the life of society. But this does not mean that they are elements of the state organisation of society. Territory and population existed before the state came into being and they will, of course, go on existing after the state has withered away.

The essence of state authority in an exploiting society is the dictatorship of the ruling class of exploiters, its political domination based on coercion with regard to the working people. This essence is fully revealed at times of revolutionary action by the oppressed and exploited masses.

Since the exploiting state is an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for protecting the system of exploitation, it is quite natural that its chief function is *suppression of the exploited masses*. This function is also

¹ G. C. Field, *Political Theory*, London, 1956, p. 57.

performed by the army, the police, the gendarmerie, the court of law and other instruments of state authority.

In the exploiting formations the ruling class also imposes on the state the task of spiritually and ideologically suppressing the working masses. But this function is performed not only by the state. Under the slave-owning and feudal systems, the Church was the chief instrument for spiritually subjugating the masses. Under modern capitalism, when the ideological struggle has been aggravated to the extreme, on the one hand, and new powerful means of indoctrinating the masses have been invented, on the other, the task of suppressing them spiritually was transferred by the ruling class, i.e., the imperialist bourgeoisie, mainly to the bourgeois political parties, all sorts of societies, as well as monopoly groupings in the press, radio, cinema and television.

The *internal functions* of the exploiting state serve to consolidate definite forms of exploitation of working people of the country; its *external functions* are defence, by means of military, diplomatic, economic and ideological struggle, of the interests of the ruling class in inter-state relations, in the international scene.

The internal and external functions of the state necessarily flow from the very nature of the exploiting state as an organisation of armed coercion over the working masses within and without the country. Nevertheless, apart from this, in all antagonistic socio-economic formations, the state in one measure or another directly influences the economic life of the country, which is also done in the interests of the ruling class.

2. Types of Exploiting States. The Bourgeois State and Its Functions

The state is a most important *part of the social superstructure*. It is quite natural, therefore, that the essential features of any state are determined by the economic basis on which it stands and which it serves. History knows three basic types of exploiting state—the *slave-owning, the feudal and the bourgeois state*, depending on the nature of this basis and on the exploiting class which stands at the helm of the state.

Each type of exploiting state is characterised by its particular aims and its methods of suppressing the working people, by its specific apparatus of coercion.

In the *slave-owning society* the source of the wealth of the slave-owners is the rapacious exploitation of slave labour by means of direct non-economic compulsion. The inhuman oppression of the slaves inevitably incited their covert or overt resistance. Quite naturally, therefore, the internal function of the slave-owning state was mainly to suppress the resistance of the slaves and ensure the slave-owners favourable conditions for direct and complete enforcement of slave labour.

Since in slave-owning society there was antagonism not only between the slaves and the slave-owners but also among the free population, it was natural that the internal function of the state was also directed against the free peasants and artisans. Its function could not, however, be exercised against these free men in such brutal and violent forms as it was against the slaves. The slaves, being mostly of foreign origin, were completely cut off from politics and the law, but the poor freemen were in one form or another allowed to participate in political life.

In *feudal society* the feudal landowners combine both non-economic and economic coercion. The peasants depend on the feudal lord primarily because he owns the land. They become personally less dependent on the exploiter. The landowner *de jure* can no longer treat the peasants as things and commit any violence against them with impunity.

Under feudalism the landowner's full ownership of land and his partial ownership of the peasant take the form of political power over a definite area and the population inhabiting it. The peasants' duties as the subjects of the feudal lord are officially regulated by law. But in practice their economic and legal position differs little from that of slaves. The task of the state, as a political organisation of the landowner class, is primarily to suppress the resistance of the peasants to economic and non-economic coercion by the landowners and thus ensure a steady flow of feudal rent into their pockets.

The character of *capitalist exploitation* inevitably gives

rise to a corresponding change in the aims and methods of suppression. The bourgeois state no longer sets itself the task of making it directly incumbent upon each worker to labour for a particular exploiter. Its aim is to ensure general conditions for capitalist exploitation, i.e., the inviolability of private capitalist property, which places the working class in direct economic dependence on the bourgeoisie. This is achieved by employing ruthless force to cut short any attempt on the part of the working class and all working people to free themselves from exploitation.

The management of the state is carried out by the capitalist class with the help of a widespread administrative apparatus. This apparatus is a force that stands above the people because of the means of its formation, its anti-democratic organisational structure and the methods it employs. It has at its disposal all the chief means of state authority: the army, the punitive organs, the intelligence service and the prisons.

Even in the most democratic bourgeois republic these special detachments of armed men are the chief instrument of the bourgeoisie's political domination, the instrument for mercilessly suppressing the people. This is how the Italian lawyer and publicist Gino Bellavita (who is certainly no Communist) describes the activities of one of the branches of the Italian police in his book, *Il paese delle cinque polizie*.

"It was certainly not a fortuitous coincidence," he writes, "that the Celere¹ appeared on the scene at the same time as the democratic Constitution of 1946 and was in a sense its antipode. On the one hand, the beautiful words about political and civil freedoms; on the other, armoured cars, machine guns, trucks, radio stations, truncheons... tear-gas, smoke bombs and hose pipes.

"It is enough for workers to stage an ordinary strike for higher pay or some other purely economic demand, for students to demonstrate in support of their 'seditious' pretension to the right of getting an education at our extremely expensive and extremely backward universities, for a column of invalids, the blind or old-age pension-

¹ One of the five types of police.

ers to appear or for a gathering of democratic patriots to bring flowers to the graves of those who fell defending Rome—for the Celere immediately to arrive on the scene....

"Always, whatever government was in office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been the centre and the main lever of political power in Italy. It is no accident that for decades it has remained entirely under the control of the President of the Council of Ministers who is thus in a position to control every aspect of the country's life, to influence it, even to the extent of abolishing or reorganising (there were always the means to do this) various institutions, including the most democratic and liberal ones.... It is the Ministry of Internal Affairs that has always been the real government of the country."¹

As the state apparatus accretes to the apparatus of the monopolies, its part in the forcible suppression of the people's resistance increases to a colossal extent. The numerical strength of the armed forces and the allocations for their upkeep swell to proportions unheard of in peacetime. Special internal military units—so-called security forces—are formed. The state apparatus becomes more and more militarised. The activities of the secret political police, which spreads its tentacles into every branch of society, acquire much wider scope. The gigantic state machine of physical coercion is supplemented by a ramified apparatus for ideologically suppressing the masses. State information agencies, radio stations, publishing houses, etc., spread an increasing volume of spiritual poison among the population, misinforming it about current events at home and abroad and propagating reactionary ideas that suit the ruling classes.

The colossal growth of this military-bureaucratic machine in the imperialist countries is due, of course, not only to the aggravation of contradictions between the financial oligarchy and the mass of the people within a country but also to the intensification of external contradictions.

¹ Gino Bellavita, *Il paese delle cinque pulizie*, Milano, 1962, pp. 24-25, 115-16.

The imperialist states form military-political alliances and endeavour to crush the revolutionary movement performing the function of a gendarme. At present, the export of counter-revolution finds its official expression in various kinds of aggressive pacts, such as NATO, SEATO and CENTO. The NATO pact, for example, specifically lays it down in its Charter that in the event of any anti-government incident in one of the member countries, the other member countries will render armed assistance for the purpose of restoring "order".

To the Marxist-Leninist teaching about the exploitative essence of the bourgeois state and the difference in principle between the bourgeois and socialist types of state, contemporary Right-wing Socialists oppose a theory of the so-called post-capitalist society and state.

The bourgeois ideologists and reformists have given this kind of state the high-sounding name of "welfare state". They usually regard the main characteristic features of this state to be state regulation of economy, which allegedly eliminates economic crises, and extensive social functions allegedly performed in the interests of all social groups.

Marxists do not deny, of course, that the economic function is natural for the modern bourgeois state and that it performs certain tasks in the social sphere. But they fully reject the efforts of bourgeois ideologists and reformists to present this as evidence of the bourgeois state growing into a "welfare state".

In actual fact, however, the increasing role played by the bourgeois state in the economy of modern capitalist countries does not signify that this state is turning into a "people's", "supra-class" state which displays equal concern for the interests of all social groups, but manifests the inability of the monopolies to secure extended reproduction of capital without the direct participation of the machinery of state. As things stand, the modern imperialist state controls and regulates economy in the interests of the monopolies, thus giving them the opportunity to turn to their advantage not only their own capital, but also to use the state treasury which is replenished by taxes levied on the population, as a sort of machine for pumping out superprofits.

Through the enforcement of certain control and regulation measures the bourgeois state is able to influence the economic cycle, but it cannot plan the development of the national economy as a whole, for the domination of the monopolies does not abolish, but, on the contrary, intensifies competition and anarchy of production, which sooner or later inevitably lead to economic crises of over-production.

As regards the *social activity* of the bourgeois state, it is brought to life, on the one hand, by the objective requirements of modern capitalist production and, on the other, by the sharp intensification of the revolutionary struggle of the working class in the period of the general crisis of capitalism both in individual capitalist countries, and on a world scale. The formation in capitalist states of such bodies as the ministries of labour, education, public health, social maintenance, culture, public works, housing construction, family and youth, tourism and sport, etc., takes place precisely during this period. The establishment of one or another of the above ministries usually coincides with acute class conflicts, mass strikes, political demonstrations, etc., in the country. Due to the competition and the struggle between the two world socio-economic systems, the bourgeoisie is ever more often compelled to make concessions to the working people.

As can be seen from history, initially the bourgeois state resorted to social activity primarily because it made it possible to employ more flexible forms of struggle against the revolutionary working-class movement. Under state-monopoly capitalism, the social activity of the bourgeois state becomes a sort of social prophylactic measure to prevent the growth of the class consciousness of the working people and the development of class struggle.

Thus the "welfare state" concept is untenable from beginning to end. What we have here actually is a resurrection of the long since discredited conception of the "conciliator-state" which claims that the state authority reconciles antagonistic classes. In fact, however, *the bourgeois state has been, and remains, an instrument for the domination of the exploiters over the exploited. It cannot and does not stand above classes.*

3. The Forms of the Bourgeois State

The *form of a state* should be understood as the means by which the ruling class organises and exercises its political power, political regime, form of government and form of state structure.

The political regime in the bourgeois state is characterised by either openly terroristic or veiled methods of suppression. Under modern capitalism, terroristic military, fascist, tyrannical regimes alternate with parliamentarianism masking the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The form of government is either monarchist or republican. The form of state structure is either simple (unitary) or complex (federal).

The character of a political regime depends primarily on the correlation of class forces and the course of the class struggle. Thus the regime of the modern parliamentary democracy in a capitalist society was formed in the fight against absolutism.

During its early stages absolutism promoted the development of the capitalist mode of production and played a progressive part compared with the feudal monarchy based on the system of estates. Absolutism put an end to feudal fragmentation. As long as it promoted economic growth it had the support of the bourgeoisie. But when absolutism had exhausted its possibilities, the bourgeoisie turned away from it, passing first to opposition and then launching an overt struggle against it. During the bourgeois revolutions in England (17th century) and France (18th century), absolutism, as the political superstructure of feudal society, was destroyed along with its economic basis.

In the course of its fierce struggle with absolutism the bourgeoisie evolved means of effecting and organising its authority, which in their totality became known as *parliamentary democracy*.

Under parliamentary democracy the population is formally granted the right to set up political parties for the protection of its group or professional interests. The supreme legislative body, parliament, is formed by country-wide elections. The party that gains a majority of seats in

parliament forms a government which directs the executive apparatus of authority.

Parliamentary democracy, when it is consistent and fully practised, presupposes a republican form of government, i.e., an organisation of the supreme governmental bodies with a president as the head of state, elected either directly by the population or by parliament. In practice, however, the bourgeoisie of a number of countries gave up consistently spreading democracy on the form of authority and preferred to have a monarchy and allowing the monarch to keep certain rights in the sphere of supreme legislative, executive and judicial power.

The form of state structure under parliamentary democracy in some countries is characterised by proclamation of the principles of *federalism* and *municipalism*. Within the federal state cantons, lands and states retain a certain degree of autonomy in exercising legislative, executive and judiciary authority. Under the municipal principle, regardless of whether the state is federal or unitary, local organs of self-government called municipalities are democratically set up and endowed with authority to deal with certain questions of the health service, transport, and so on, and are formally regarded as independent of the officials (prefects, etc.), appointed to local government posts by the central executive authority.

Parliamentarianism is a system of bourgeois political power under which the whole population, or its majority, is granted only the formal right to participate in the formation of the supreme organ of power, to take part in the elections to parliament, but in fact is not allowed to exert any real influence on the affairs of state. This method of organising state power above all ensures the domination of capital, protects the supremacy of private capitalist ownership of the means of production and thus restricts the people's participation in state affairs by economic means.

Bourgeois democracy considerably restricts both economic and political participation of the working people in governmental affairs. Freedom of speech and assembly is fundamentally curtailed because the press, radio and television and the places of assembly, are controlled by the bourgeoisie, which is not at all interested in making them available for an expression of the people's will.

The bourgeoisie employs many political means of restricting the democracy of the working people. While formally proclaiming universal franchise, it usually hedges in this right with all sorts of provisos and qualifications—educational, residential, etc. The bourgeois electoral systems are so designed as to prevent the election of genuine people's representatives to parliament, or make their election extremely difficult. By using all possible types of the so-called majority electoral system, which in reality is nothing more than legalised political swindle, the bourgeoisie very often manages to distort the real will of the electors in one way or another.

The decay of the economic basis of capitalism under imperialism leads to the crisis, to the disintegration of the bourgeois-democratic political system. Having won the commanding heights in the machinery of state, the monopolies do all they can to nullify democracy, to abrogate or pare down to a minimum the democratic rights of the working people, and to acquire complete freedom to pursue a reactionary home and foreign policy.

In the stage of imperialism, particularly under state-monopoly capitalism, not all capitalists but only their upper crust, the financial oligarchy, exercises state administration of society. The state becomes a committee for the management of the affairs of the monopoly bourgeoisie. The subordination of the state apparatus to the monopolies has considerably weakened the role of parliament in the political life of the capitalist countries.

At first sight it may seem that there can be no question of any crisis or decline in parliamentarianism since the First World War and the October Revolution. In actual fact, this period has seen a further democratisation of franchise. In most countries women have gained the right to vote—in Britain in 1918, in Germany in 1919, in the United States in 1920, in France in 1946, and so on. In certain countries (France and Britain, for example) the property qualification has been abolished and such political and social rights as the right to set up trade unions, the right to strike, the right to state insurance have been extended. These rights have been given legal force by parliament, which would thus seem to confirm the fact that it increasingly expresses the people's sovereignty.

There is no doubt that a certain strengthening of democratic tendencies in the social life of a number of countries is taking place. This is primarily the result of the active struggle of the working class and all the working people against the monopolies, against the forces of reaction. But at the same time one must see also the opposite processes, showing that, parallel to the democratisation of the electoral system and the extension of the social and political rights of the working people, the real political weight of parliament, as the supreme representative body of government, systematically diminished, and consequently the possibility of the masses to exercise any appreciable influence on governmental policy through parliament has decreased in spite of a tremendous growth in the number of voters (the electoral reforms of 1918 to 1920 in Britain, for example, trebled their numbers). In the new historical conditions parliament is no longer the government's master. On the contrary, the government is usually the master and lord of parliament.

The composition and the political line of governments in many countries are determined by a narrow group of financial magnates and monopolists. Obviously this omnipotence of the monopolies is concealed by the observance of all the formal requirements of parliamentarianism. In effect, however, the monopolies gain control of all the intermediate links in the political system on which the formation of a government depends.

The most important of these links are the political parties. When a bourgeois political party gains a majority in parliament, the upper crust of the party shares out the cabinet posts and its leader becomes head of the government. Thus the party leadership in addition to being master of their party become master of parliament. Parliament falls under the control of the government, that is, under the control of ruling party groupings. This tendency continues to develop in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, the crisis of its policy, the crisis of bourgeois democracy.

The shift of the centre of gravity in the upper sections of the state machinery towards the government is accompanied by an intensified centralisation and bureaucratisation of all government bodies from top to bottom. Federal

states become, in effect, unitary states. A vivid example of this is the United States and Switzerland, where the states and the cantons have lost a considerable amount of their previous autonomy and are now fully dependent on the central government, particularly in the financial sphere.

Both in federal and unitary states the municipalities have preserved only a semblance of independence. Their activity depends more and more on instructions from the central government bodies and their emissaries on the spot.

The crisis of the parliamentary forms of organisation of bourgeois authority is accompanied by a crisis in the liberal methods of exercising this authority, the methods of manoeuvring and partial concessions. In this period there is a tendency towards replacement of the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary regime by an authoritarian regime, which is characterised by methods of direct military suppression, methods of terroristic action against revolutionary and opposition forces.

The legality which in any case prescribes to all citizens and government bodies to act according to the law, thus protecting to an extent the individual from arbitrary treatment by the state, is becoming ever more of a burden for the imperialist bourgeoisie. It regards the rule of law as an anachronism and a left-over of liberal times.

The imperialist bourgeoisie's rejection of legality expresses itself particularly in the encouragement given to the political gangsterism of various unofficial, para-military fascist organisations. If monopoly capital considers it politically inexpedient to use the army and the police to crush a revolutionary or just a strike movement, the job is passed on to legal, semi-legal or illegal terroristic organisations which perpetrate political assassinations, and blackmail and terrorise the population with the tacit consent and even the protection of the police.

The activities of the notorious Mafia in the south of Italy provide a typical example of the use of secret terroristic organisations for political purposes.

The crisis of parliamentary democracy reveals itself also in the fact that within the framework of this democracy in the very beginning of the contemporary epoch there

arose a bourgeois party which, because of its extreme reactionary orientation, categorically rejects parliamentary democracy with its multiparty political system and proclaimed principles of popular sovereignty, representative government, the rule of parliament, the division of authority, federal state structure and local self-government. This was the fascist party.

The fascists replace the principle of representative government by the principle of one-man dictatorship, which cuts out any possibility of election, replacement and accountability to the population on the part of government bodies. The introduction of one-man dictatorship as a principle of state building is the logical conclusion of the reactionary tendency to concentrate all power in the hands of the executive bodies, in the hands of the bureaucratic civil-service apparatus.

The tendency for the bourgeois party machine to coalesce with that of the state, and to form a single powerful apparatus for the terroristic suppression of the masses, reaches its final and concentrated expression under fascism. Fascism develops to culmination *the tendency towards the conversion of a bourgeois-democratic state into a police state.*

Fascism as a form of dictatorship of the monopoly bourgeoisie is the complete rejection of parliamentary democracy. However, despite all the differences that exist between the fascist political regime and the bourgeois-democratic regime, they have much in common. The kinship between parliamentary democracy and fascism, as two major forms of a modern bourgeois state, is confirmed by universally known historical facts. Thus, after the First World War three forms of bourgeois state succeeded each other in Germany: the Weimar Republic (1918-33), Hitler's Third Reich (1933-45) and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). But whatever their distinctions, their economic basis and class nature are alike. In all of them actual political authority fell into the hands of the financial oligarchy. Therefore it was quite natural that by their anti-communism and abettment of fascism, the bourgeois parties prepared the ground for the National-Socialists' coming to power.

Fascism is the terroristic dictatorship of the imperialist

bourgeoisie, while parliamentary democracy is its disguised dictatorship. What under imperialism in parliamentary countries manifests itself only as a tendency, under fascism is elevated to the status of a principle of state building. Fascism is the dictatorship of the most reactionary, chauvinistic circles of the imperialist bourgeoisie. First and foremost, it is the dictatorship of that part of the imperialist bourgeoisie that considers it superfluous to share power with any other sections of the bourgeoisie, particularly the middle bourgeoisie.

The domination of monopoly capital in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism, the merging of the power of the financial oligarchy with that of the state in the imperialist countries inevitably generate a tendency towards fascisation of social and state life. This does not mean, however, that political reaction connected with the omnipotence of the financial oligarchy is bound to take the final form of a fascist regime. The establishment of fascism is not a fatal inevitability. Whether parliamentary democracy is to be preserved in a capitalist country or whether it will be replaced by a military-fascist dictatorship depends on the strength and solidarity of the working class, its organisation and unity, its ability to lead other sections of the population in the struggle against reaction.

No matter how limited bourgeois democracy may be in the matter of meeting the vital interests of the proletariat, the proletariat cannot stand aside when the financial oligarchy is conducting a vicious offensive against the democratic freedoms that have been won by the people in the course of a long and hard struggle, when it is seeking to destroy these freedoms, to abolish parliament or nullify its role in the state.

Bourgeois democracy was established, consolidated and extended not by the bourgeoisie alone. More often than not the bourgeoisie consented to the extension of democracy mainly because it was forced to do so by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. The working class has always fought to broaden democracy because democracy offers the most favourable conditions for economic and political struggle against the bourgeoisie, for rallying around itself the non-proletarian working masses. One of

Lenin's great behests is that the masses cannot be led to socialist revolution without fighting for democracy.

In their fight against the oppression of monopoly capital the proletariat and its Marxist-Leninist parties strive to make maximum use of the bourgeois-democratic freedoms and to extend them to the utmost. In certain countries, in Germany, for example, in the late twenties and early thirties, in France in the thirties, in Italy and France after the Second World War, the proletariat succeeded in winning important positions in bourgeois parliament. Thanks to their numerical strength the communist groups in the parliaments of some countries are capable of preventing parliament from becoming a mere appendage of the government. They use parliament not only as a platform for the exposure of the bourgeois government's anti-popular policies but also to carry through certain reforms for the benefit of the working people, increasing their revolutionary preparedness and promoting their solidarity.

The significance of various democratic reforms and institutions depends on the correlation of class forces, on the scope of the revolutionary struggle, on the ability of the working masses and their parties to uphold their gains.

The mass democratic struggle might give rise to more or less broad class alliances and their victory result in the emergence of diverse forms of states or governments of a transitional type. During the first Russian revolution of 1905-07, for example, Lenin upheld the need of an alliance of the workers and peasants and advanced the idea of the establishment of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry which could with time develop into the dictatorship of the proletariat. While states of the basic type are usually the rule of a single class, states of a transitional type may embody the rule of an alliance or a bloc of different classes united by common interests, as for example, the interests of the struggle against reactionary feudal forces, the furtherance of democratic reforms, and so forth. History has also shown that popular front governments, expressing the interests of a bloc of progressive forces which want to preserve democracy, can emerge in the fight against fascism. It stands to reason that this precludes neither contradic-

tions of diverse class forces within such a bloc, nor the leading role of a certain class which, owing to its place in society and historical conditions, stands at the helm of the movement. In the contemporary epoch, the proletariat is the most consistent fighter for democracy.

4. The Socialist State in the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism

The socialist state is a *qualitatively new historical type of state* in which political power belongs to the working class. It differs in principle from all types of the exploiting state.

The exploiting state is designed to safeguard the socio-economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production and on exploitation, and to consolidate and perpetuate the division of society into classes, favourable to the ruling class. The working class, on the contrary, uses state power to abolish exploitation of man by man and all its causes. The proletariat needs the state not to consolidate and perpetuate its position as a class but to eliminate all the conditions that give rise to the division of society into classes. The proletariat regards the socialist state as the basic instrument for the transformation of capitalist into a communist society. When it has carried out the tasks of communist construction, it should wither away.

In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, the socialist state is a powerful instrument of the class struggle in the hands of the workers against the overthrown but still fiercely resisting exploiters.

In its content this state is a *dictatorship of the proletariat* whose essential feature is suppression of the resistance of precisely the exploiter classes—the bourgeoisie and its direct ally, the landowners. The dictatorship of the proletariat is nothing else than the political power of the working class which in alliance with all working people destroys the exploiting system and builds up a new, socialist society.

Although the dictatorship of the proletariat is an instrument of the class struggle of the progressive forces

both within a country and on the international scene, the class struggle is not an aim in itself for the proletariat. It is above all a means of ensuring more or less favourable conditions for fulfilling its historic mission. Lenin frequently stressed that proletarian dictatorship does not imply only violence and not even mainly violence. The dictatorship of the proletariat is primarily an instrument for transforming the socio-economic, political and ideological aspects of social life along socialist lines.

To carry out the tasks of socialist revolution the proletariat must have the direct, immediate support of other toiling classes. Hence it follows that an alliance between the proletariat and the non-proletarian toiling masses (the petty bourgeoisie of town and country, the intelligentsia, the middle strata, etc.) is essential for the realisation of the tasks of dictatorship of the proletariat. The formation of such an alliance is a matter of life and death for the socialist state. The maintenance of such an alliance with the non-proletarian toiling masses, primarily the peasantry, which makes it possible to accomplish the tasks of socialist revolution, was called by Lenin the *supreme principle of proletarian dictatorship*.

The alliance between the working class and the peasantry, as an essential condition of the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, can be strong only when the leading role in it is played by the working class. State guidance of the peasantry by the proletariat presupposes constant concern for the consolidation of their alliance, the adoption of measures to ensure that the peasants completely break away from the bourgeoisie, and efforts to bring them into active participation in socialist construction.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is just as inconceivable without the suppression of the resistance of the deposed exploiting classes as it is inconceivable without democracy for the working people.

Proletarian democracy is the *highest type of democracy*, compared with what has previously been achieved in the history of society. First and foremost, it is democracy for the overwhelming majority of the population, democracy for the broadest masses. What is more, unlike bourgeois democracy, proletarian democracy is not confined to a formal proclamation of the political rights of the working

people. It shifts the stress to their actual realisation. Freedom of speech is ensured by the fact that the printshops, supplies of paper, radio and television are turned over to the working people. Freedom of assembly is achieved by giving the working people the best buildings and, above all, providing them with the leisure time without which freedom of assembly is just an empty phrase. The realisation of political freedoms for the working people is impossible without depriving the bourgeoisie of the advantages ensuring their unshakable domination in any bourgeois republic, even the most democratic, and primarily without abolishing private ownership of the basic means of production.

The very first acts of the Great October Socialist Revolution—abolition of landed estates and capitalist property, the transformation of the country's wealth into the property of the whole people, the granting of political and social rights to the working people, the eradication of national oppression and inequality of women, etc.—disclosed the profoundly revolutionary, democratic essence of a socialist state. The purpose of such a state is economic, social and political emancipation of the masses. Therein lies the profound meaning of the humanism of the October Revolution.

The need to crush the resistance of the enemies of the revolution gave rise to the coercive function of the socialist state, which it performed in the interests of the working people.

The degree of severity on the part of the dictatorship of the proletariat towards the conquered but not eliminated bourgeoisie depends on the degree of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie. This fact alone explains, for example, why the Soviet Government was forced to disfranchise the bourgeoisie, while under people's democracy the bourgeoisie was not as a rule deprived of electoral rights.

There may be a one-party or a multiparty system under the dictatorship of the proletariat depending on the concrete historical conditions. In the Soviet Union, for example, it took quite some time for the one-party system to become established. Initially, prior to the counter-revolutionary putsch in July 1918, the Left-wing Socialist-Rev-

olutionary Party was the second biggest Soviet party after the Bolsheviks. It even had its representatives in the Soviet Government for a certain period. As far back as in the beginning of 1920, during the grim days of the Civil War, the Mensheviks took part in the elections to the Moscow Soviet, and their leader Martov was even its deputy. But the development of Soviet democracy showed that not only the bourgeois parties but also the petty-bourgeois pseudo-socialist parties have no roots in the people, and, inasmuch as they worked for the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R., the people rejected them once and for all.

In Rumania and Hungary the one-party system was formed as a result of the liquidation of the reactionary bourgeois-landowner parties, the unification of the Communists and Social-Democrats on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles, and the self-dissolution of Left-wing petty-bourgeois parties in accordance with the will of their members.

In some of the People's Democracies both the Communist and democratic parties take part in the administration of the state. Such parties exist, for example, in Bulgaria, Poland and the German Democratic Republic. The Communists there far from seeking their liquidation, on the contrary, even consider them essential in the period of socialism inasmuch as they firmly adhere to the socialist prospects of development and mobilise their members to active co-operation with the people's rule.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a state concept. All its vital functions are realised primarily through the state and its apparatus. But it must be borne in mind—and this is also an expression of the profoundly democratic spirit of the socialist state—that many political and mass organisations such as trade unions, co-operative societies, youth leagues, and others, vigorously further the goals of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist and Workers' Parties are the guiding and directing force of the entire system of state and mass organisations in socialist states.

The working class evolves the state form of its political authority in conformity with the national and concrete historical conditions.

A feature of a socialist state is political centralisation

of its administrative-territorial areas which is demanded by the requirements of modern production, and social ownership of the means of production. At the same time, the socialist state as a direct organisation of the working people, embodying consistent democracy in its structure, must offer its administrative-territorial areas the maximum of autonomy in deciding local questions.

In the socialist state, in complete accord with democratic centralism and internationalism, the national minorities living in compact mass on a definite territory are granted the right of autonomy. Under certain conditions, in a multinational country a federal form of state structure may be recognised as expedient.

There is a great diversity of *state forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat*. From the historical point of view, the Paris Commune was the first type of a state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. By analysing the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels deduced a number of vitally important features of the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat: direct and universal political organisations of the masses as the basis of state power; unity of legislation and administration; a republican form of government; democratic centralism as the basic principle of state structure; the electivity, accountability and replacement of all persons in authority as essential constitutional guarantees for the observance of proletarian democracy.

The Paris Commune only outlined the general features of the state form of the proletarian dictatorship, whereas the Soviet Republic in Russia was able not only to confirm them but to develop them in all respects. The Soviets were the most mass and all-embracing working-class organisation created on the initiative of the workers themselves. They appeared in Russia during the revolution of 1905 and again in 1917, but this time not only as Soviets of Workers' but also as Soviets of Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. Lenin pointed out that if the revolutionary classes by their creative initiative had not set up the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless undertaking, for with the old apparatus the proletariat would have been unable to retain power, while a new one could not be set up immediately.

The Soviet form of proletarian dictatorship was the most

acceptable and effective in those historical conditions, and the whole experience of life and struggle of the Soviet state demonstrates its enormous historic significance.

The *people's democratic* republics of Europe and Asia, having a number of features that distinguish them from the Soviet Republic, were established in new historical conditions.

In all People's Democracies there exists under various titles a mass socio-political organisation, the Popular Front, of a kind that the Soviet Republic never knew. The Popular Front is the organisational form of the alliance of the working class, the toiling peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. In some countries, the German Democratic Republic, for example, it has also served as an organisational form of the political alliance of the working class and the patriotic elements of the national bourgeoisie. The Popular Front advances a programme common to all social groups. It provides for co-operation between the Communist and other democratic parties.

The character of the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat depends on certain objective factors in a particular country. The means by which the power of the bourgeoisie is overthrown, the relation of class forces within the country and in the world, the degree and methods of the resistance offered by the exploiting classes, the degree of political consciousness and the forms of organisation of the working class, the forms of political activity of the peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, the specific features of the development of the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, the experience of the preceding proletarian revolutions, the presence or absence of a neighbouring socialist state, the might of the socialist camp, the level of economic development and character of economic structure, national composition, territory and density of population—all these things, taken together, determine the specific state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Marxist-Leninist teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat has for many decades been the target of bitter attacks by bourgeois ideologists, reformists and revisionists.

In the past the renegades of Marxism in all manner of ways distorted the Marxist teaching on the dictatorship

of the proletariat, while hypocritically quoting Marx and Engels, but now they have openly repudiated this teaching and proclaimed that their ideology of "humane and democratic socialism" is hostile in principle to any form of dictatorship.

Typical of the attitude of all Right-wing socialist theoreticians is the statement made by Benedikt Kautsky at the Congress of the Socialist Party of Austria in November 1957 to the effect that Austrian Socialists reject dictatorship in any form, and under any name, and will fight against it no matter who exercises it. Such declarations are spearheaded not against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie but against the dictatorship of the proletariat. The practical experience of the class struggle has shown that wherever the Right-wing Socialists came to power they did not constitute any threat to the ruling bourgeoisie. Only the establishment of genuine rule of the working class can pave the road to socialism.

5. Development of the Socialist State During Communist Construction

The achievement of economic and political goals of the transitional period carries with it substantial changes in the activity of the socialist state, in its organisation, forms and functions.

When socialism is victorious and the exploiting classes have been abolished, the dictatorship of the proletariat drops such a function as the utilisation of coercion against the deposed but still resisting exploiting classes. When a fundamental change occurs in the social nature of the peasants, when they cease to be a class of small private owners and turn into a class commonly owning the basic means of production, the material causes for any sort of wavering of the peasantry disappear and, consequently, the dictatorship of the proletariat no longer has to fulfil the task of preventing and eliminating this wavering. The socio-political and ideological unity of society raises the alliance of the working class and the peasantry and the leading role that is played in this alliance by the working class to a new and higher level.

The socio-economic changes arising from the completion of the building of socialism determine the further development of democracy.

Under socialism such social gains as the right to work, to rest and to education become law. The growth of the material welfare and the tremendous rise in the cultural level of the mass of working people enable them to take a greater part in the affairs of state than in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

All political inequality disappears as a result of the abolition of the exploiting classes and the radical change in the social nature of the peasantry and the intellectuals. The political regime of the epoch of socialism is one of all-round, consistent socialist democracy.

As socialist construction is completed and socialist relations of production are consolidated, and as the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia draw still closer together, the proletarian democracy develops into *socialist democracy for the whole people*.

Under these conditions the socialist state becomes the state of the *whole people* embodying the will of all the people—the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia. At the same time the working class, being the most progressive class of society, continues to play the leading role in it. Although it is no longer the instrument of the political domination of one class, the state as before promotes the policy and the programme of the working class—the building of communism.

The elimination of the exploiting classes does not automatically lead to the disappearance of anti-social, parasitical elements. They continue to exist for a relatively long time even after the victory of socialism, i.e., after the destruction of the social environment that engenders them. Thus, the function of protecting socialist property and public law and order, and also the personal property and the safety of citizens from thieves, bandits, hooligans and other anti-social elements, remains a feature of the socialist state at this stage of development too.

The state of the whole people continues the cause of the dictatorship of the proletariat—the building of communism—and jointly with other socialist countries is waging a class struggle against world imperialism. In the sphere of

foreign relations the socialist state of the whole people performs the same functions that had been characteristic of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The *external functions* of the socialist state include above all the defence of the country from foreign attack, the defence of socialist gains from the threat of imperialist aggression. The function of armed defence will remain a feature of any socialist state so long as imperialism exists, so long as an irreconcilable class struggle between socialism and capitalism is waged on the international scene. The development of this function wholly depends on the course of the struggle between the two opposing systems, the capitalist and the socialist, on the course of the revolutionary struggle in the capitalist countries and throughout the world.

The struggle to strengthen world peace, to prevent expansionist wars has been one of the most important external functions of the Soviet state since its establishment.

Exercising the function of safeguarding peace, the Soviet socialist state strives to ensure peaceful conditions for building communist society in the U.S.S.R., consolidate the positions of the world socialist system in its competition with capitalism, create favourable conditions for the struggle of the working class of the capitalist countries and to facilitate the struggle of the peoples against colonialism and neo-colonialism.

The external function characterising the relations between *socialist states* is the function of economic, cultural and military-political mutual assistance. Its consistent discharge by socialist states ensures the complete victory of socialism within the framework of the entire socialist community and reliably guarantees every socialist country against attacks of world imperialist reaction.

In the process of the gradual transition to communism the *economic-organisational and cultural functions* of the socialist state are intensively developed. In the economic sphere the main task is to create the material and technical basis of communism; in the cultural sphere it is to complete the cultural revolution, to create all the ideological and cultural prerequisites for the victory of communism.

"Communist construction," says the Programme of the

C.P.S.U., "presupposes the maximum development of *democratic principles of management* coupled with a strengthening and improvement of *centralised economic management by the state*. The economic independence and the rights of local organs and enterprises will continue to expand within the framework of the single national economic plan. Plans and recommendations made at lower levels, beginning with enterprises, must play an increasing role in planning."¹

The economic-organisational and cultural-educational functions of the socialist state are destined to be passed on as a legacy to the communist society. Accordingly, the state apparatus of economic management and cultural administration is destined to develop into a highly organised apparatus for guiding the economy and culture of communist society. Speaking of the prospects of development of the socialist state apparatus, Lenin indicated that "this apparatus of administration in the proper, strict, narrow sense of the word, this apparatus of the old state, is doomed to die; while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Economic Council is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, performing all the main activities of organised society".²

The socialist economic system presupposes the principle of distribution according to work. When enforcing this principle and regulating distribution, the socialist society resorts to the law. The law, in its turn, requires the coercive sanctions of the state. The law is nothing without the state. The function of control over the measure of work and consumption is exceptionally important under socialism and can wither away only when complete communism is built. "The state," Lenin wrote, "will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', i.e., when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour has become so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability*."³

¹ *The Road to Communism*, p. 533.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 408.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 469.

In his work, *The State and Revolution*, Lenin disclosed the general character of the process of the development and the withering away of the socialist state. He showed that the concept "socialism" and the concept "the first or lower phase of communism" coincide; that with the building of socialism the state withers away only so long as there are no classes which have to be politically suppressed, in other words, when there are no classes over which the working class must exercise dictatorship; that communist statehood is the statehood of socialist society, the statehood of the first phase of communism. This statehood withers away only with the building of complete communism, with the transition of society to the highest phase of communism.¹ The historical development of the Soviet state abundantly confirms Lenin's ideas. It shows that although political suppression disappears with the elimination of antagonistic classes, it does not mean that the socialist statehood and the internal and external functions of the state consistent with new conditions also disappear.

From the Marxist-Leninist point of view, the final withering away of socialist statehood is equal to the withering away, first, of any political coercion and of the organs enforcing this coercion and, second, of the special state apparatus for administering society.

Lenin held that the withering away of socialist statehood was a gradual process which would take place as the economic foundations of developed communist society are created, social wealth is accumulated, and the cultural level and communist awareness of the masses are enhanced. Only profound changes in the economy can liquidate the survivals of the old forms of division of labour which bind a man to one occupation, and put an end to the situation when the management of social affairs is a special profession. At the same time only deep changes in the economy and prolonged moral education and self-education of the masses can turn concern for social affairs and the desire to play an active and voluntary part in them into an inseparable feature of the moral make-up of each member of society.

¹ See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 458-60, 464-67, 471.

The withering away of the state depends on a range of objective factors, namely, economic development, the growth of the material welfare of society and communist awareness of its members, the overcoming of the essential distinction between town and country and between mental and physical labour, the eradication of the distinctions between the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, and so forth. Apart from the above *internal processes*, the withering away of the state depends on *external conditions*, too; it will become possible only when communist society is built and when it is victorious on a world-wide scale.

The all-round *flourishing of socialist democracy* is an essential internal prerequisite both for the development of socialist statehood and for its subsequent transformation into communist public self-government.

The development of socialist democracy in the U.S.S.R. takes place primarily through the strengthening of the Soviets.

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies are the nationwide state and mass organisation of the citizens of the Soviet Union. Because of their all-embracing character and their socio-political nature as organs of people's self-government, they combine the features of state and mass organisation.

The system of Soviet socialist democracy is not limited to the Soviets alone, but also includes, as we have already said, other mass organisations of working people. Consequently, it is impossible to imagine the formation of organs of communist self-government except as a process of all-round development not only of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies but also of other organisations making up the system of Soviet socialist democracy, as a process of further extension of the powers of the Soviets and the enhancement of their role and that of mass organisations in general in the life of the state.

Today the growing role of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies as a mass organisation signifies that the deputies are being drawn more and more not only into working out decisions on important problems concerning the activity of industrial enterprises and construction projects, collective and state farms, cultural and service estab-

lishments, but also into the work of organising the execution of these decisions. For this purpose, alongside the improvement of the forms of popular representation and the strengthening of the democratic principles of the Soviet electoral system, the following measures are being introduced.

First, an increasing number of questions which are now under the jurisdiction of various administrations and departments of the Executive Committees of the Soviets are being handed over to the jurisdiction of the standing commissions of the Soviets. An ever greater number of people from all strata of the population is drawn into the work of the standing commissions at all levels.

Secondly, the democratic principle of electivity and accountability of officials to the representative organs and the electors is being extended to all leading personnel in the state administration.

Third, people's control is coming to play a greater role. The people's control commissions functioning throughout the country fully rely on the constantly growing activity of the public.

The leading place among the mass organisations is occupied by the Communist Party, the vanguard of the Soviet people. In 1967, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had almost 12,800,000 members, or about 7 per cent of the country's adult population. The growth of the C.P.S.U. membership and the improvement of its social composition by drawing into its ranks the most active and politically conscious representatives of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the intelligentsia, and the significant growth of the organisational experience of its leading workers enable the Party directly to influence all spheres of life of Soviet society and to consolidate the Party nucleus in all state organs and mass organisations.

The advocates of anti-communism are endeavouring to discover a "discrepancy" between the propositions of the C.P.S.U. Programme on the development of socialist statehood into communist public self-government and the increase of the Party's role in the period of communist construction. The authors of the Introduction to the anti-communist collection, *The Future of Communist Society*, assert

that it is a matter of "the take-over of some of the state functions by Communist Party organs".¹

This assertion is completely false. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has never been and will never be a state organisation. In guiding society the Party does not lean on state coercion but on its ideological strength and moral authority.

State coercion will die with time. As a result of the final victory of socialism in the USSR, the sphere of coercion in the activity of the Soviet state has sharply narrowed. Obviously, a socialist society cannot do without state coercion while there is still crime, parasitism, and so forth. But coercion of this sort is applied only to an insignificant minority. The faster the rates of communist construction, the greater the communist awareness and conviction of the people, the lesser the cases of violation of the laws of socialist society and the broader the sphere of application of the methods of persuasion and education.

The all-round development of socialist democracy is viewed in the Soviet Union as one of the most important social prerequisites for the transition to a classless and, in the long run, a stateless communist society.

¹ *The Future of Communist Society*, Introduction, New York, 1962, p. 7.

Chapter VI

WAR AS A SOCIO-HISTORICAL PHENOMENON. PROBLEMS OF WAR AND PEACE IN THE CONTEMPORARY EPOCH

In the contemporary epoch the question of war and peace is agitating the whole of mankind. Whether there will be war or not and whether it is possible to avert it—these are not just rhetorical questions, but the most urgent, burning problem of the day.

The need for a determined struggle to safeguard peace and prevent a new world war imperatively calls for an understanding of the causes engendering wars and of the very nature of wars; it calls for a penetrating analysis of the correlation of the social forces fighting for peace and the forces bent on unleashing war.

The practical questions of the activity and struggle of the Communist and Workers' Parties for the triumph of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, their struggle against anti-communism, militarism and fascism, for social progress and the rights of the working class, for the elimination of the vestiges of the disgraceful colonial system are closely connected and organically intertwined with the problem of war and peace.

1. War Is the Continuation of the Policy of Social Classes

The history of class society abounds in wars between different classes, nations and states, wars which imposed incalculable sacrifices, destruction and suffering on mankind. The Swiss scientist Jean Jacques Babel with the help

of electronic computers has calculated that in the past 5,500 years 14,513 wars had raged on our planet taking a toll of more than 3,500 million lives. Though very approximate, these figures nonetheless give a definite idea of the scale of the spread of wars in class society. At all times, the brunt of the wars was borne by the working people. They fell in battles, died from epidemics and endured calamities and privations. In the wars society's productive forces were mercilessly wrecked, crops were trampled underfoot and cultural values destroyed. No wonder that even in the distant past progressive thinkers courageously spoke out against wars unleashed by oppressors and demanded the creation of a legal barrier to block them. Erasmus Desiderius, the great thinker and humanist of the Renaissance, wrote: "If war, contrary to all things, be the seed of all evils, a certain ocean sea of all natural things, wheresoever they be; if all flourishing things through the vice of this do putrefy, things increased do die, things underset [well established] do fall, things well and substantially builded do perish, and that are sweet wax sour. . .".¹

The outstanding German Enlightener of the 18th century Johann Gottfried Herder gave the following vivid characterisation of wars: "War, when it is not fought in self-defence, but is a deliberate attack on a peace-loving neighbouring people, is a vicious, most inhuman venture threatening destruction and annihilation not only to the attacked nation, but equally the nation that unleashes it. What can be more repulsive for the Supreme Being than the sight of two armies destroying one another without any reason? And the concomitants of war which are still more dreadful than war itself—diseases, hospitals, hunger, plague, rapine, violence, countries laid waste, families falling apart, moral degradation for generations to come?"²

Bitterly condemning war Juan Bautista Alberdi, a prominent Argentinian public functionary and pacifist of the 19th century, wrote: "War means the right to commit

¹ *The Complaint of Peace*, by Erasmus Desiderius, New York, 1946, p. 8.

² Johann Gottfried Herder, *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, Leipzig, S. 82.

crimes; it is a terrible, blasphemous absurdity, a vicious mockery of civilisation."¹

But even the most passionate and emotional criticism of war from the standpoint of abstract pacifism cannot explain the historical and socio-economic causes giving rise to wars in a particular epoch of economic development.

The question of the nature of wars, their origin and essence, has long since been troubling the best minds in various historical epochs. But the pre-Marxist philosophers, sociologists, historians, politicians and military leaders, who studied this problem, as a rule went no further than investigating the extraneous superficial phenomena.

In any epoch war is an extremely complex socio-historical phenomena whose cognition is inconceivable without an understanding of the motive forces of social progress in general. In the final count it was the idealist view of human society of the pre-Marxist philosophers, sociologists and historians that was responsible for their unscientific and often naive concept of the nature and essence of wars. Thomas Hobbes, a prominent 17th century English philosopher and ideologist of the ascendant bourgeoisie, explained the causes of wars in the following words: "In the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory.

"The first, maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation."²

The naivety of such an explanation is obvious. But what is more, Hobbes considered the state of *bellum omnium contra omnes* to be the natural state of the human race. Thus, he justified all the aggressive wars waged by the English bourgeoisie in the 17th and early 18th century in its bid for commercial and colonial domination.

Capitalism which replaced feudalism did not abolish wars. On the contrary, it made them more destructive. War became a constant concomitant of the capitalist system. Unable to find effective ways of delivering mankind from wars, bourgeois ideologists called them uncognisable phenomena, in their essence, inherent in man's nature from

¹ Juan Bautista Alberdi, *El crimen de la guerra*, 1866.

² Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*, Oxford, 1871, p. 81.

the beginning of time. Such a distinguished thinker as Immanuel Kant, for example, who advanced a plan for "eternal peace" resting on mutual legal guarantees, was very far from understanding the real causes of war in human society. "The war," he wrote, "does not require special motives: it is obviously ingrained in human nature."¹

Such explanations of the essence and the causes of war, were more or less typical of the majority of pre-Marxist thinkers. It was impossible to uncover the real causes of wars in human society from idealist positions. The failure to discover the real causes of wars and their socio-economic foundations, logically led many thinkers to the conviction that the true causes and motives of wars were concealed in the very nature of man and that they were allegedly inevitable and unavoidable. This view fully accorded with the interests of the bourgeoisie since it enabled them to justify their unjust wars by referring to their "natural" imminent character.

Franz Mehring, a prominent Marxist military theoretician, wrote on this score: "The Moloch of war remained for them an invisible enemy; they knew nothing either about its origin, or about its essence, and therefore had to grope their way in utter darkness whenever they had to deal with the problem of eliminating it."²

Marxism-Leninism uncovered the true causes and nature of wars and their historically transient character and indicated the conditions under which mankind will be able to get rid of them for all times.

This was the logical result of Marxism's cognition of the material basis of human being and objective laws of social development. On the basis of the dialectical-materialist understanding of social development Marx, Engels and Lenin showed that deep socio-economic prerequisites were at the bottom of all wars. They showed that any war was the result and the product of the real contradictions of a society divided into hostile antagonistic classes, an expression and continuation of the policy of those classes.

"War," wrote Lenin, "is a continuation of policy by other means. All wars are inseparable from the political systems

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Zum ewigen Frieden*, Düsseldorf, 1946, S. 48.

² Franz Mehring, *Krieg und Politik*, Bd. I—*Militärpolitische und Militärgeschichtliche Aufsätze*, Berlin, 1959.

that engender them. The policy which a given state, a given class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war is inevitably continued by that same class during the war, the form of action alone being changed.”¹

The proposition that war is a continuation of policy by other, forcible means was first expressed by Karl Clausewitz, a military theoretician of the early 19th century. It is perfectly correct in its general form. Signifying a step forward in the understanding of the essence of war, it nevertheless did not grasp the problem in its entirety. In Clausewitz’s conception war was a continuation of the policy of monarchs, conquerors, generals and the state, allegedly expressing the interests of the whole of society. Clausewitz was unable to discern that definite classes with their class interests were standing behind these men, and that the state was a policy-making instrument of the ruling class. His bourgeois outlook prevented him from giving a completely scientific and consistent explanation of the socio-historical essence and conditionality of wars. Not so Marxism-Leninism. Lenin’s definition of war is a profound dialectical penetration into its very essence. “We must be clear as to what historical conditions have given rise to the war, what classes are waging it and for what ends. Unless we grasp this, all our talk about the war will necessarily be utterly futile, engendering more heat than light.”² Once the essence of war has been disclosed, an answer can be given to the question of its origin. Since war is a continuation and expression of class policy, it is obvious that it owes its origin to the split of society into classes—the propertied and the have-nots, the oppressors and the oppressed.

War is therefore a specific phenomenon of a society split into hostile classes.

In a classless society, under the primitive-communal system there were no antagonistic classes, no state and no standing armies. Of course, in the primitive-communal system there were also cases of violence and clashes between different tribes and clans. But these clashes were not planned hostilities and flared up sporadically, from time

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 400.

² *Ibid.*, p. 399.

to time. It would be basically incorrect to identify an act of violence or a clash with war in the proper sense of the term. War as such is an armed fight between specially organised groups of people, a continuation of the policy of definite social classes. The division of society into hostile classes, the existence of the state and standing armies are the chief prerequisites of war as a socio-historical phenomenon. Slavery gave rise to wars of conquest, which were a continuation of the slave-owners' policy. The chief aim of these wars was the capture of slaves and plunder. In a feudal society the seizure of land and serfs was the chief object of wars which were a direct continuation of the policy pursued by the feudal lords. Under capitalism wars are waged for the sake of enrichment of the capitalists and the conquest, division and redivision of the spheres of influence and markets. The great German poet and thinker Goethe gave the following fitting definition of all these wars:

*Krieg, Handel und Piraterie —
Dreieinig sind sie, nicht zu trennen.*

But all systems of exploitation based on the domination of one class over another necessarily engendered wars of liberation of the oppressed against their oppressors, people's wars against foreign invaders. By their very nature such wars are diametrically opposed to wars of aggression.

The fact that war is a continuation of the policy of classes determines both its social and historical character. The existence of classes themselves is a historical phenomenon evolving from the creation of surplus product and the establishment of private property. There were no classes in primitive society, nor will there be any in communist society. The abolition of the society divided into antagonistic classes and the gradual disappearance of every and all classes are the material basis for the elimination of wars as a social phenomenon. The social and national preconditions of wars will disappear together with the antagonistic classes, with the victory of socialism throughout the world. In other words, wars will disappear just as naturally as they had appeared.

Marxism-Leninism disclosed the material and socio-economic basis and historical character of wars. This in

its turn has made it possible to prove scientifically that given definite socio-historical prerequisites wars would be inevitably excluded from the life of society.

2. The Dependence of Wars on Socio-Economic Factors

The definition of war as a continuation of policy by other, forcible means shows that the policy of classes, parties and states stems from economics or, as Lenin has put it, is "a concentrated expression of economics". Hence war as a forcible means of settling political issues directly depends on economic factors, such as the level of development of the productive forces and the economic system or basis of a given society.

Every phenomenon of social life, whether it occurs in the political or ideological sphere, in the final analysis is directly or indirectly determined by the *material basis of the social being*. This is fully true of wars. The methods of warfare and violence stemming from the character and level of development of military techniques and organisation of armed forces depend directly on the economic set-up in a given epoch and country. Classics of Marxism always stressed the decisive role played by the economic factor in the development of the armed forces and military art. "Nothing is more dependent on economic prerequisites than precisely army and navy," wrote Engels. "Armament, composition, organisation, tactics and strategy depend above all on the stage reached at the time in production and on communications." And added: "The whole organisation and method of warfare, and along with these victory or defeat, prove to be dependent on material, that is economic conditions."¹

The type of armaments employed in war depends on the level of the productive forces of society. The history of wars and military art, as it were, mirrors the development of the productive forces. The low, primitive level of the productive forces of the slave-owning and feudal societies determined the military armaments of the time.

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 230 and 236.

The swift growth of the productive forces under capitalism, due to the introduction of steam and electricity and other types of power, led to a sharp improvement of military equipment and the development of new and the perfection of old firearms. Lastly, the discovery and utilisation of atomic power promoted unprecedented progress in military equipment and the development of weapons of mass annihilation.

Just as the development and perfection of armaments depends on the productive forces of society, the organisation of the armed forces and the method of their employment in combat (strategy, tactics) depend on the changes in armaments and the character of social system of a particular country. Thus the linear tactics and linear formations employed by Frederick II during the Seven-Year War (1756-63) fully reflected the level of the military equipment and the feudal relations prevailing in Prussia at the time. The Prussian army of mercenaries still used linear tactics even when progress in armaments due above all to the perfection of firearms led to frightful decimation of linear formations.

The victory of the bourgeois revolution in France which destroyed feudal relations in the country and in the army led to the appearance of scattered formation which was in keeping with the requirements of warfare. This formation coupled with massive column formations at the decisive sectors of military operations was one of the main reasons of Napoleon's victories over the European feudal-monarchist armies.

The big advance in the development of firearms, especially artillery and machine guns in the First World War, led to the employment of positional warfare. Conversely, the massive use of tanks, aircraft and airborne troops in the Second World War accounted for its highly mobile, manoeuvring character. The development of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles in the contemporary epoch has fundamentally changed the structure and organisation of the armed forces and the manner of employing them.

The level of the productive forces in a particular country is the material foundation of its military power, for without a highly developed heavy industry it is impossible

to produce the necessary types of armaments. The existence of such a basis was one of the most important conditions that enabled the Soviet Union to withstand the onslaught of the military machine of nazi Germany, which was the most powerful at the time. Today, on the basis of its highly developed heavy industry, the Soviet Union has created formidable weapons capable of crushing any aggressor in the event of war.

Emphasising the influence of production and the means of communication on the means of warfare it should also be borne in mind that the productive forces naturally do not determine the social essence and the aims of war. The latter depend on the character of the socio-economic system, on the class nature of the states at war.

In countries where society is made up of antagonistic classes, the armed forces, the armies, are the most important means with which the exploiting classes maintain their domination within the country and carry out military actions abroad. The specific role played by the armies in the system of these states, is determined by one of their major functions, that of waging war.

Being a direct continuation of policy, war becomes a permanent function of the exploiting state in an antagonistic class society. This creates the need to maintain standing armies and unceasingly manufacture armaments. Thus, there is a sort of a vicious circle in a society founded on exploitation: the function (war) creates the organ (army and armaments) which in turn stimulates the function since militarism and the militarists in such a society constitute one of the most reactionary and aggressive forces.

The modern history of some leading capitalist countries convincingly proves that this vicious circle does exist. Regarding war as the principal instrument of national policy, as a means of extending *Lebensraum* and plundering other nations, the Prussian-German militarism made the army into a force standing not only above the people but above all state organs. The criminal activity of Prussian-German militarism which incited and unleashed aggressive wars of conquest is universally known.

In the contemporary epoch the United States of America has become a classical country of militarism, and no

amount of demagogical subterfuges of the U.S. propaganda can conceal this fact. Even in peacetime it maintains an army of more than 3,000,000 men and stations its troops in many countries thousands of miles away from the U.S.A.

It was reiterated at the 23rd Congress of the C.P.S.U. that today the U.S. imperialism is the centre of world reaction and the principal hotbed of war in the world. It is the main organiser of aggressive military blocs and all sorts of military gambles. Flagrantly violating international law the U.S. imperialists are arrogantly interfering in the internal affairs of Latin American countries; they organise and finance reactionary military coups and mercilessly crush the revolutionary and national liberation movements. By helping reactionary Cuban emigres to launch direct military intervention, they tried to throttle the Cuban revolution and restore the rule of capitalists and landowners on the island.

The U.S. imperialism is waging a criminal war in Vietnam. Tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers are on the long-suffering Vietnamese soil to burn and plunder. U.S. aircraft are barbarously bombing towns and villages in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, killing thousands of peaceful citizens, women, children and old folk. The criminal policy of escalating military operations against the Vietnamese people conducted by U.S. imperialists is pregnant with terrible danger for the cause of world peace.

Many sober-minded U.S. politicians are becoming increasingly aware of this danger. In this respect a very significant admission was made by Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon. Censuring the aggressive foreign policy of the Johnson Administration, he declared in Congress: "In my opinion, the military aid that we are furnishing to many countries in the world constitutes one of the greatest threats to world peace."¹ An eloquent admission, indeed.

In their book *U.S.A. Today*, Helen and Scott Nearing, progressive U.S. publicists, present a vivid picture of militarisation in the U.S.A. They write: "Pro-war forces in the United States are massive and formidable...they have behind them...the vast institutional apparatus of

¹ *Congressional Record-Senate*, May 27, 1966, p. 11163.

the armed forces. . . . The major channels of communication are in the hands of the war makers and their backers."¹ And add: "It is a frightening picture: the wealthy U.S.A., armed to the teeth, with its entourage of satellites and mercenaries, dedicated to the preservation and extension of the property and class forces inherent in private enterprise for profit."²

Inflated military budgets, the continuous arms race even in peacetime, the militarisation of the entire state structure of the capitalist countries, reflect the deep crisis and decay of imperialism.

The conclusion can be drawn that the character of wars depends on the character of the social system, on the class essence of states, on the policy of those classes which define the aims of war.

3. Marxist-Leninist Classification of Wars

A scientific understanding of the essence and origin of wars and their dependence on the material basis of social being, and on the class structure of society makes it possible scientifically to classify wars according to their aims and character. Depending on the political and economic aims of a given class or state, wars can be *just or unjust, progressive or reactionary*.

Not infrequently classification of wars is based on various factors which make it impossible to define their social content, as for example, factors of a strategic-military or religious-ethical nature. But whatever the role of the strategic-military factors they do not allow to ascertain the main thing—the social content and character of wars, that underlies their division into just and unjust wars.

As for the religious-ethical considerations, they themselves flow from more profound causes, namely, from the economic and social system of society. History records many predatory wars and campaigns which were waged under the flag of various religious ideas and a subjectivist

¹ Helen and Scott Nearing, *U.S.A. Today*, Harborside, Maine, 1955, p. 200.

² *Ibid.*, p. 234.

class interpretation of "law". Suffice it to recall the notorious crusades whose genuine purpose was the plunder of the Orient with the blessing of the Church. Or take the devastating Thirty Years' War in Germany in 1618-48, in which the religious rivalry between the Catholics and the Protestants was used to screen the war that was waged for economic and political domination over Germany.

The Marxist-Leninist approach to the classification of wars rests on a scientific criterion and flows directly from its general understanding of the role played by coercion in the life of society.

It would be appropriate to point out that Marxism-Leninism by no means denies the role played by force in social development. The use of force at definite stages in history is essential when it is used to overthrow the rule of reactionary classes and abolish their institutions, set up the power of progressive classes, establish a new revolutionary order and defend the national and state independence of peoples. In such cases coercion acts as an important factor of historical development. But Marxism-Leninism has never considered force to be a permanent category and never justified its use in all cases. It maintains that force is used by some social groups against other social groups only in societies divided into antagonistic classes. Class antagonism gives rise to national antagonism while taken together these antagonisms lead to the employment of force in the form of various military measures and conflicts. The disappearance of class antagonisms does away with the need to use force as a means of achieving economic and political aims. "In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes," wrote Marx and Engels, "the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end."¹ The ideal of socialism is the elimination of force and violence in the relations between men. Lenin wrote: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But socialism is opposed to violence against men in general."²

Marxism-Leninism puts the class principle at the basis of its scientific classification of wars. The character of a

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 51.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 285.

war is determined by the economic and political aims which a particular class strives to achieve by force of arms, by war.

Lenin pointed out in this connection that there are just and unjust wars, progressive and reactionary wars, wars waged by advanced classes and those waged by backward classes, wars aimed at bolstering class oppression and wars aimed at overthrowing it.

Just, progressive wars include social revolutions in the form of armed insurrections, civil wars of oppressed classes against their oppressors, wars waged by peoples for national liberation from the foreign imperialist yoke and wars in defence of the socialist motherland and of all socialist countries. These wars, despite the sacrifices and destruction which they inevitably bring in their wake, are expression of historical progress and become inevitable and necessary at definite stages of historical development.

Lenin wrote: "There have been in the past numerous wars which, despite all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering that inevitably accompany all wars, were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy most harmful and reactionary institutions. . . ."¹

Within one and the same socio-economic formation, when the same class is in power in different countries, wars between countries which have a similar class structure may be either just or unjust depending on whether the country concerned is defending its national freedom and independence or whether it is waging an aggressive war of conquest.

When Hitler Germany in the Second World War by the "right of strength" occupied and subjugated the small neutral Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Greece, Yugoslavia and other countries, the struggle of these countries against the aggressor was just, though their social-economic basis was similar to that of Germany.

It is basically important to make a concrete analysis of any war taking into account all its causes, its character and consequences. Marxism-Leninism bases its appraisal-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 299.

al of wars of any epoch on an analysis of the sum total of the social, economic and political factors of which a given war is an expression. In this connection Lenin indicated that it was necessary to analyse wars dialectically, in their entire contradictoriness and changeability stemming from the changes in the aims of the policy which they express and continue. In certain conditions just wars may become unjust and vice versa.

Lenin wrote: "That all dividing lines, both in nature and society, are conventional and dynamic, and that *every* phenomenon might, under certain conditions, be transformed into its opposite, is, of course, a basic proposition of Marxist dialectics. A national war *might* be transformed into an imperialist war *and vice versa*. Here is an example: the wars of the Great French Revolution began as national wars and indeed were such. They were revolutionary wars—the defence of the great revolution against a coalition of counter-revolutionary monarchies. But when Napoleon founded the French Empire and subjugated a number of big, viable and long-established national European states, these national wars of the French became imperialist wars and *in turn* led to wars of national liberation *against* Napoleonic imperialism."¹

There have been cases in history when unjust, predatory wars turned into their opposite and became wars for the triumph of the revolution and for national liberation. This took place following a fundamental revolutionary remaking of the entire socio-economic and political system of the country at war.

Tsarist Russia, in alliance with other big capitalist countries, waged an unjust war of conquest for the division of the spheres of influence and repartitioning of the already partitioned world. The Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 overthrew the power of the capitalists and land-owners and established the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. The Decree on just, democratic peace without annexations and indemnities was the first decree adopted by the Soviet Government. But the imperialist powers, including Russia's former allies, would not grant peace to the young Soviet Republic. The foreign imperial-

¹ Ibid., Vol. 22, p. 309.

ists instigated the Civil War and the military intervention against the world's first state of workers and peasants. The war of Soviet Russia against the internal and foreign restorers of capitalism became a just, defensive war to safeguard the political gains of the revolution and national independence.

During the Second World War the peoples of Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria were involved by the ruling cliques of traitors into the unjust and predatory war against the Soviet Union on the side of Hitler Germany. The serious defeats of the fascist coalition and the transfer of hostilities to the territory of Germany's allies enabled the revolutionary democratic forces to come to power in these countries. Acting in conformity with the will of their peoples, these forces broke off with Hitler Germany, declared war on it and formed an alliance with the anti-Hitler coalition.

This also shows that the character of a war directly depends on the political aims of the ruling social forces and that its nature undergoes dialectical changes, as it is waged.

In the contemporary epoch the most typical and widespread just wars are the wars of the oppressed peoples for the overthrow of foreign imperialist domination, the wars for national liberation. The wars of the peoples of Egypt, Syria, Algeria and other African and Asian countries against foreign imperialists were just wars for the fundamental rights of these peoples.

A just war arouses enthusiasm and the will to achieve victory over the enemy among the people and in the army. The most powerful military and industrial potential cannot be utilised to the full unless this moral factor operates, unless there is an irresistible will to win. And conversely, the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people and their belief in the justness of their cause can to an extent make up for the shortage of the material means of warfare (armaments, ammunition, foodstuffs, equipment, etc.) The civil wars in America and France in the 18th century, the Civil War in Russia in 1917-22 and the heroic fight of the oppressed peoples against imperialists for freedom brilliantly confirm the importance of the moral factor in achieving victory over the enemy.

In the modern epoch there may be also just wars of the peoples of the socialist countries against imperialist

aggression and attempts to restore the capitalist system. The most striking example of such a war was the Soviet Union's war against nazism.

But it was not only a just war for the freedom and independence of the Soviet peoples who were confronted with the threat of enslavement by nazi Germany. It was the war against the most reactionary imperialist power which had set out to conquer and exterminate whole nations and peoples. By winning this war, the Soviet people safeguarded the foundations of world socialism and together with other peoples saved civilisation from nazi vandalism.

Other brilliant examples of a just war of a socialist state for the preservation of the social gains and national freedom was the heroic fight of the Cuban people against the U.S. sponsored aggression which ended in the shameful defeat of the interventionists at Playa Jiron, and in recent years the self-sacrificing decisive struggle of the courageous Vietnamese people also against the aggression of the U.S. imperialism.

Marxism-Leninism does not at all conceal the fact that the sympathies of Communists are always with those who are fighting for freedom and independence against social and national oppression. The proletariat and its revolutionary parties fully understand the fight of the peoples against oppressors and aggressors because the proletarian morality contains elements of the universal morality acquired by the working people in the course of centuries of struggle against oppressors and exploiters. The Marxist-Leninist criterion in classifying wars into just and unjust not only takes into account the interests and morality of the proletariat, but also those of all working people fighting against social and national oppression.

Such in brief are the general features of just wars. The very fact of the existence of just wars in history presupposes the existence of their antipode—unjust wars.

If one side perpetrates aggression, then the other fights for its freedom and independence. Formally, each side pursues the same aim—to achieve victory, but the victory of one side signifies the defeat of the other side. In this case a war that is just for one side is unjust for the other and vice versa. Of course there may also be cases when a war is unjust for both sides. A typical example of this

is the First World War, in which all participants pursued predatory, anti-popular aims. Wars of this type were also waged in the slave-owning epoch and in the Middle Ages (wars between slave-owners, dynastic wars).

Unjust wars include those whose aim is the seizure of foreign territories and the plunder and subjugation of other countries, wars of the exploiting classes against a revolutionary people and counter-revolutionary wars against countries where the revolution of the progressive class has triumphed.

The most destructive of all unjust wars are imperialist wars, which are waged in the interests of monopoly capital for markets, sources of raw material, the division and redivision of the world. The epoch of imperialism is one of unprecedentedly ruthless world imperialist wars which involve the majority of the world's populations, take a toll of tens of millions of killed and maimed and ruthlessly destroy the productive forces. If we take into account the indirect losses through starvation and diseases, over 100,000,000 people, the most active section of the population, perished in the two world wars which raged during the lifetime of one generation.

From the standpoint of the number of people involved in hostilities and the nature of the weapons used it can be said that there are *world* and *local* wars, wars in which *conventional weapons* or *weapons of mass destruction* are used. In the post-war period the aggressive imperialist circles repeatedly unleashed and are unleashing local wars to maintain and strengthen their economic and political positions and check the objective historical process of the disintegration of the colonial system. The biggest of these wars were the war in Korea in 1950-53 instigated by the U.S. imperialists, the war in Egypt (1956) unleashed by the Anglo-French imperialists, the wars in Malaya, Indonesia, Algeria and other countries. Local wars more often than not hold the potential danger of overgrowing into a world war involving all or the overwhelming majority of the countries of the world. The Second World War was also preceded by a series of local wars and forcible annexations by the "Axis" powers.

The danger of local wars developing into world wars is made real by the complex and varied interlocking of

the economic and political interests of the Great Powers in any part of the globe. This danger is especially great today when there are two opposing socio-economic systems in the world. If a conflict breaks out between them, it is bound to assume a global character with the employment of all weapons of mass annihilation. But it would be wrong to deduce from this that Marxism-Leninism denounces all local wars. Any such war is just for the nation fighting for its freedom and independence and unjust for the nation striving to preserve its domination or impose it on other nations.

All the local wars of the post-war period were fought between imperialist countries and countries struggling for their national freedom. In principle, however, such wars may also occur between individual imperialist countries. This possibility is offset today by the desire of the imperialists to consolidate all their forces against the national liberation movement. Most of the imperialist countries have become members of various aggressive blocs set up under the aegis of U.S. imperialism. But even so the contradictions between their imperialist members frequently become extremely sharp.

Today imperialist countries possessing nuclear weapons are constantly tempted to use them against countries fighting for their national independence. The principal factor deterring them is the world socialist system which is backed by the nuclear might of the Soviet Union. It is hardly necessary to prove that an attempt to use nuclear weapons in any local war will have the most disastrous consequences for the whole world, because in the present-day conditions it would lead directly to a global thermonuclear war. This explains why all the peace-loving forces of the world led by the Communist and Workers' Parties are resolutely fighting against the most extremist imperialist circles striving to use nuclear weapons in local wars.

4. Criticism of Contemporary Militarism

The contemporary epoch is characterised by a profoundly specific nature of social development. The main content of our epoch is the world-historical process of the

transition of human society from capitalism to socialism. The young system of world socialism, which is rapidly developing and gaining in strength, exists side by side with the system of world imperialism which still retains strong economic and political positions although it is on its way out. These two systems, developing in accordance with diametrically opposite laws, are confronting each other in the world today.

Prompted by their hatred for socialism and concern over the future of world capitalism, the imperialist countries are uniting in aggressive military blocs spearheaded against the socialist countries. But apart from their chief aim, that of preparing and starting a war against socialist countries, these blocs are an attempt to iron out or reconcile the intense contradictions between the imperialist powers themselves at least for the time being. Due to its overwhelming economic and military preponderance U.S. imperialism is turning these blocs into instruments for achieving its economic and political domination and strives to mobilise the resources of their member countries in preparation of an aggressive war against the world socialist system.

In the contemporary epoch a world war, by its class essence, would be a war of the aggressive imperialist powers led by the U.S.A. against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The unprecedented development of armaments, the weapons of mass annihilation at the disposal of the two camps—atomic and hydrogen bombs, the latest means of chemical warfare, intercontinental jet bombers and rockets—turn the danger of a new world war by the imperialist countries with the U.S. at their head into a constant factor of international tension.

Many imperialist ideologists, who are at the beck and call of the monopolies, are striving to convince the peoples that a new world war and with it the end of civilisation is inevitable, that a new world catastrophe is imminent. Creating an atmosphere of pessimism and despondency, they are undermining the faith of the peoples in progress and turning them into obedient tools for furthering their adventuristic designs. It is the ideology of militarism which directly seeks to justify and substantiate the inevitability

of a world war and the arms race for the sake of the enrichment of the monopolies.

Being one of the most loathsome products of monopoly capitalism modern militarism organically unites the apparatus of violence and man-hating ideology and strives to justify and vindicate the inevitability and legitimacy of expansionist wars. It is in general characteristic of militarist ideology to laud wars as the natural condition of society in which peace is a breathing spell and a period of preparation for new wars. War is proclaimed a natural, eternal and inevitable condition and law governing relations between nations, races and states. This view was cynically expressed in their time by such reactionary precursors of modern imperialist ideology as Nietzsche and Spengler. "You must love peace," Nietzsche preached, "as a means for a new war. And a brief peace, more than a durable one. . . . You say that a good cause sanctifies even war? I tell you that a good war sanctifies any cause."¹ Spengler held that war was the eternal condition of men and that states existed only to fight one another.

Nietzsche's and Spengler's views of the nature of war formed the bedrock of the criminal ideology of the Prussian and German militarism and nazism. The latter regarded aggressive wars as a sort of national craft and tried to prove that they were necessary and inevitable. "Eternal peace," wrote Moltke, one of the recognised apostles of Prussian-German militarism, "is a dream and none too beautiful at that. War is an essential element in the order of the world."²

Present-day militarism with its criminal ideology of violence, plunder and destruction constitutes a terrible danger for mankind. Whatever its national form—American, British, West German, etc.,—it expresses the interests and political aims of the most reactionary monopoly circles.

An essential specific feature of the modern militarist theories is that they preach the necessity and inevitability

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, "Also sprach Zarathustra", *Nietzsche's Werke*, 1. Abt., Bd. VI, Leipzig, 1904, S. 67.

² *Moltkes Kriegslehren. Die operativen Vorbereitungen zur Schlacht*, Berlin, 1911, S. 1.

not only of wars in general, but *mainly of a military conflict between the two world systems—capitalism and socialism*. Moreover these theories are openly anti-communist in character.

The main argument produced to prove that a new world war is inevitable is the thesis that peaceful coexistence between the two systems is impossible. Imperialism's ideological stock in trade is marshalled up to substantiate this thesis. *This logic of rejecting peaceful coexistence necessarily leads to the recognition that world conflict is inevitable between the imperialist camp and the countries of the socialist community*. The criminal idea of a preventive war, now widely current among militarist circles in the West, is the direct outcome of this.

To prove the impossibility of peaceful coexistence the ideologists of imperialism flagrantly distort the true aims and principles of the ideology and policy of socialist countries.

The principal "argument" advanced by bourgeois ideologists against the possibility of peaceful coexistence of the two systems is the widespread thesis about the "incompatibility" of the principle of peaceful coexistence with recognition of the necessity of socialist revolution.

This thesis distorts the theory of socialist revolution which holds that war is neither a precondition nor a cause of revolution. Socialist revolution matures as a result of the aggravation of class contradictions, which leads to a revolutionary situation in a given country. Therefore Marxism-Leninism decisively opposes all attempts to "push on" socialist revolution from without by unleashing war. Such attempts can only harm the world revolutionary process; they do not accelerate its development, but, on the contrary, retard mankind's transition to socialism. Opposing the export of revolution the Communists at the same time fight against all attempts to export counter-revolution. This is clearly and unambiguously stated in the resolutions of the 1957 and 1960 Moscow Meetings of fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties.

Owing to its very nature, socialism as a social system requires neither wars nor the seizure of foreign territories, nor the enslavement of other people for its development. In this and other respects it is the direct antipode

of the bourgeois system. That this is so may be seen from the entire history of the Soviet Union. "We represent," Lenin wrote, "the peace interests of the majority of the world's population against the imperialist warmongers."¹

In present-day conditions rejection of the possibility of peaceful coexistence of the two systems is tantamount to recognition that a new world war is inevitable. It is not accidental therefore that those who want such a war view the rejection of peaceful coexistence as the main factor making a world conflict inevitable, from which they derive the idea of a "preventive war", now one of the basic elements of the official military doctrine of the imperialist NATO countries.

The most reactionary and aggressive imperialist circles hope that preventive war will enable them to crush the socialist states, destroy the world socialist system and thus reverse the course of history. Today a preventive war means a sudden attack against the socialist countries on the pretext of preventing them from attacking first. This is the meaning imparted to the concept of "preventive war", for example, by Coudenhove-Kalergi, one of the leading cosmopolitan ideologists of modern capitalism and a proponent of abstract pacifism. "Preventive war," he writes, "is defence against imminent attack. It is also a defensive war in the shape of offensive war."²

There are many cases in history when the aggressor in making war on his victim called his criminal actions "preventive". Hitler acted in exactly the same way when he perfidiously and suddenly attacked the Soviet Union. A sudden and perfidious attack are the chief attributes of a preventive war. In the past such action was a crude violation of the elementary standards of international law and morality, whereas today, in the epoch of thermo-nuclear weapons, the very idea of "preventive war" is a heinous crime against peace and humanity.

Militarist circles in the imperialist countries persistently propagandise the thesis that the West will survive in a future world war, which they consider inevitable, only if

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 323.

² Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Vom Ewigen Krieg zum Grossen Frieden*, Göttingen, 1936, S. 71.

it attacks first, unleashing the entire might of its nuclear potential against the socialist countries. An American military ideologist Dale Smith unambiguously champions a preventive war in his book *U.S. Military Doctrine*: "When the very lives of nations are at stake in absolute war, that nation first able to apply the most destructive power to the heart of its enemy will be the nation to survive."¹

West German militarism is especially keen on the idea of "preventive war" against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The West German journal *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* carried an article entitled "Some Thoughts About a Total Nuclear War". Its author, Ihno Krumpelt, a former Wehrmacht officer and now a retired colonel and a military theoretician of sorts, wrote that he who first delivers a sudden and massive thermonuclear blow will have decisive advantage over he who hesitates to use nuclear weapons on a massive scale.

The idea of "preventive war" is essentially untenable and fallacious today. It is, above all, a specific way of recognising and expressing the profound crisis of the policy and ideology of imperialism. Indeed, only the leaders of a bankrupt socio-economic system, which is unable to stand up to an advanced system in their historical competition, can so candidly preach the criminal idea of "preventive war" on the pretext of an alleged threat of an attack on the capitalist countries. This idea does not hold water in yet another respect. In the present-day conditions its realisation is more than doubtful. The potential aggressor who banks on "preventive war" against the socialist countries will come up against a force that is not only equal to that of the aggressor, but which considerably exceeds it in a number of decisive spheres of modern military techniques, particularly in rocketry.

Moreover the geographical and strategic position of the socialist community ensures a high degree of deconcentration of manpower and industry making it impossible for the aggressor to achieve victory even if he launches a sudden attack. It should also be borne in mind that in modern conditions, the early warning and the highly efficient radar

¹ Dale O. Smith, *U.S. Military Doctrine*, N.Y., 1955, p. 142.

systems make the possibility of a sudden attack more than just problematical.

"Preventive war" is a most reactionary and dangerous idea of modern militarism. It is not only the logical result of the rejection of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems, it embodies the vain attempt of the imperialists to reverse the course of history and to stop or hamper historical progress.

Apart from attempting to prove that another world war is inevitable by denying the possibility of the two systems peacefully coexisting and preaching "preventive war", modern imperialist ideologists insistently spread the thesis that the causes of wars are rooted in the nature of man, which makes these wars inevitable and inescapable. The very nature of man is treated without consideration for the developing and changing social relations which directly shape it.

John Fuller, a British military ideologist, also attributes the inevitability of wars to the vices of human nature. He also asserts that the causes of wars are rooted not in the social system, but in the psyche.

"It is in the envies, greeds and fears of men," he writes, "that the roots of war are to be found. . . . The Law of Retribution will continue to govern the actions of men."¹

Fuller views the whole of human history through the prism of the bourgeois reality which breeds such psychic phenomena as "envy, greed and fear". He does not understand that they are the product of a definite social system whose laws no longer govern the destiny of the whole of mankind.

Disregard for man's social nature and the laws of social development provides the modern oracles of the "end of the world" with food for making the most pessimistic prognostications concerning the destinies of man. Especially typical in this respect is Kurt Fervers's book *Vernichtungskrieg* published in the Federal Republic of Germany. Proclaiming that war is an inalienable attribute of human nature and a general law of social being, Fervers categorically rejects any possibility of preserving peace and

¹ J.F.C. Fuller, *The Second World War 1939-45*, London, 1948, p. 412.

considers that it will not be long before mankind inevitably perishes. "Atom bombs, missiles, bombers, heavy tanks and submarines," he writes, "are all considered to be the achievements of the 20th century.... But the war which they serve is timeless.... For it evidently lies at the root of human nature and human character."¹

After making this peremptory statement regarding the nature of war, he draws from it a no less peremptory conclusion: "These weapons which man has created for himself will destroy life as such, and not only the life of an individual or a group, but life on earth in general."² He concludes his truly apocalyptic work in the same bombastic style. "An invisible cloud of destruction is already threatening from the sky!" he writes. "Do you hear the ticking of the Geiger counter?"³

Fervers's book presents a striking illustration of the terrible conclusions which recognition of war as an inalienable element of human nature can breed. But his views are neither fresh nor original. He is merely one of many contemporary reactionary ideologists who identify the imminent doom of capitalism with the destruction of the whole of mankind. Suffice it to recall similar prophecies in Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* written at the beginning of the 20th century.

In his malicious anti-communist book *Aufstand des Abendlandes*, Bernhard Martell, a reactionary West German ideologist and Spengler's follower, once again (for the umpteenth time) sentences civilisation to death. "Total atomic war.... The U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. will destroy all human and animal life on our planet which has shrunk in size."⁴

The thesis of bourgeois ideologists that war stems from the nature of man is untenable, for it treats the essence of man unscientifically. They view the essence of man as a mystical irrational substance or a purely biological category, essentially identical with the sum total of the instincts of any animal organism. The anthropological in-

¹ Kurt Fervers, *Vernichtungskrieg*, Frankfurt am Main, 1956, S. 11.

² *Ibid.*, p. 273.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

⁴ Bernhard Martell, *Aufstand des Abendlandes*, Schweinfurt, 1961, S. 325.

terpretation of war in human society therefore differs little from the biological interpretation of all social phenomena in general, including wars.

Even today many bourgeois ideologists explain war from the position of social-Darwinism, inconclusively declaring it to be a "biological law" or a manifestation in human society of "the general law of the struggle for existence". Thus Ferdinand Miksche, a prominent bourgeois military ideologist and spokesman of the official NATO doctrine, declares: "War has always been a phenomenon so closely bound up with human life that it would almost appear to be a necessity and a biological law."¹

The classics of Marxism-Leninism have convincingly proved utter untenability of such an approach to social phenomena in general and to such a complex social-historical phenomenon as war, in particular. The inability of many modern ideologists to understand the true essence of wars is the direct outcome of their failure to understand the *essence* of man as a *social* and not a *biological* category, as the sum total of social relations.

"The whole Darwinist teaching of the struggle for existence is simply a transference from society to living nature of Hobbes's doctrine of *bellum omnium contra omnes* and of the bourgeois-economic doctrine of competition together with Malthus's theory of population. When this conjurer's trick has been performed (and I question its absolute permissibility . . . particularly as far as the Malthusian theory is concerned), the same theories are transferred back again from organic nature into history and it is now claimed that their validity as eternal laws of human society has been proved. The puerility of this procedure is so obvious that not a word need be said about it."²

All doctrines, views and theories of militarism are reactionary and dangerous because they are aimed at justifying and proving the inevitability of a new, thermonuclear world war.

But it would be wrong to think that the ideologists of imperialism are always fully outspoken when it concerns

¹ Ferdinand O. Miksche, *Atomic Weapons and Armies*, London, 1955, p. 214.

² Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 302.

the inevitability of a new world war. Sometimes they try to cover up their inhuman views with the words about peace and humanity. Hence the popularity among many ideologists of the theory of preserving peace through "the balance of nuclear power". It claims that the best way of maintaining peace is through the constant threat of mutual nuclear annihilation. Among the prominent advocates of this conception are the American military ideologists Henry Kissinger and the West German military ideologist Lothar Rendulic. Kissinger describes the contemporary relations between West and East as a "nuclear impasse" and Rendulic as "military stalemate". They maintain that this is the most favourable state for the preservation of peace. They categorically reject the very idea of universal disarmament as a means of averting a world thermonuclear catastrophe. Yet, common sense tells us that peace based on the threat of employment of nuclear weapons is an exhaustive war of nerves, a cold war that is constantly liable to turn into a hot war.

Unlike the reactionary aggressive ideology of imperialism, Marxism-Leninism, the life-asserting ideology and theory of the working class, is convinced in the triumph of peace and progress. This conviction is based on the scientific analysis of social development in the modern epoch.

The main and decisive thing in appraising the prospects of war and peace is the fact that imperialism has irretrievably lost its dominant position in the world and can no longer decide the fates of states and nations at will.

Owing to the prerequisites and conditions that have taken shape in the world today it is quite possible to prevent another world war, to frustrate the imperialists' designs for unleashing aggressive world wars.

The general correlation of forces of socialism and capitalism in the world has changed. In the not too distant past there was only one socialist state on the globe but today there exists a world socialist system which is a mighty material and moral force capable of bridling the imperialist aggressors. In this respect the Soviet Union with its nuclear-rocket potential plays the leading role in this system. The anti-monopoly struggle of the working class is incessantly mounting, and the workers of all coun-

tries are consolidating their ranks in the fight against imperialism and militarism. The developing national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America is also spearheaded against the imperialist aggressors, against their efforts to unleash a world war. The steadily mounting world peace movement has a broad general democratic character and embraces the most diverse sections of the population in all countries.

These are new phenomena of modern historical development characterising the laws of the contemporary epoch of transition from the old bourgeois to the new, socialist society whose forces are growing and strengthening.

Yet there is also another real possibility in the present-day epoch, the possibility of the aggressors unleashing a world war. In their all-out bid for world domination the reactionary forces of monopoly capitalism, the forces of the warmongers, have thrown overboard all moral and humane considerations. Therefore the struggle of the forces of peace and progress against the forces of reaction and war acquires decisive significance.

In the forefront of this historic fight for peace are the Communist and Workers' Parties which are shouldering the great responsibility for the destiny of the peoples, for organising and rallying all progressive forces battling against war and aggression.

As long as there are aggressive imperialist forces in the world the peoples of all countries have to display constant vigilance, resoluteness and ability to cut short any imperialist actions aimed against peace.

The masses are the chief makers of history and the prevention of war and maintenance of a stable peace on earth depend on their actions and struggle.

Chapter VII

**THE ROLE OF THE MASSES
AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY**

**1. Gnoseological and Social Roots of Idealist
Theories Concerning the Role of the Masses
and the Individual in History**

The Marxist-Leninist teaching on society originated and developed in the struggle against idealist theories which denied the objective nature of the laws of social development and the decisive role played by the masses in history.

Pre-Marxist theories about the historic process were dominated by two conceptions—the *subjective-idealist* and *objective-idealist*—of the role of the masses and the individual. Though differently interpreting the role of the individual, both conceptions maintain that ideas and not the material human relations determine the development of society; therefore, they deny that people play a creative, conscious role in history. They call the people a “passive mass”, a “crowd” which obeys either the ideas of great personalities or the will of the “absolute spirit”.

Subjective idealists portray history as conglomeration of chance events conditioned by individual peculiarities in the lives of great men, while objective idealists regard it as a predestined process.

The classics of Marxism have shown that these conceptions are derived from the religious idealist doctrine that all natural phenomena and historic events are determined and guided by the will of the gods or their chosen “heroes”, while the toiling people are mere pawns blindly obeying what is ordained from above. “The idea that political acts, grand performances of state,” wrote Engels,

"are decisive in history is as old as written history itself, and is the main reason why so little material has been preserved for us in regard to the really progressive evolution of the peoples which has taken place quietly, in the background, behind these noisy scenes on the stage."¹

Making a fetish of the part played by separate individuals in history, the advocates of such views argue that only a few "chosen" personalities from the ruling exploiting class who bear the "stamp of divinity and genius" can engage in statecraft, science, music and art, and shape history in accordance with their own will and desire. It was this belief that created the cult of the "chosen" who were hailed as "heroes" and crowned with a halo of sanctity, infallibility and super-natural power. At the root of this anti-scientific notion lies fear of the people's revolutionary movement and, quite often, the desire to justify the domination and exploitation of the majority of people by an insignificant minority, in order to hold the masses in submission.

Charles Ferguson, an American philosopher, notes that many contemporary sociological works portray people as a "vapid, inscrutable, volatile body of odd and assorted creatures whose sole function it is to receive the impressions given by the most vociferous leaders".²

Modern bourgeois ideologists preserve in the main the already traditional image of the people as a "passive crowd". Even today many of them call the masses a stumbling block on the road to progress, an obstacle hindering the creative activities of brilliant personalities. Arthur Salter, a British sociologist, tries to prove in his *Personality in Politics* that there is "need to give a greater weight, in seeking the causes of great events, to the personal action and the personality of great men". In his opinion "history is the net result of the interaction of impersonal forces and the personalities of those who are in positions of authority".³

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 220.

² Charles W. Ferguson, *A Little Democracy Is a Dangerous Thing*, New York, 1948, p. 36.

³ Arthur Salter, *Personality in Politics*, London, 1948, p. 20.

At the same time a certain change of scenery has taken place in modern bourgeois conceptions regarding the role of the masses and the individual in history. According to them, masses still form the base of the social pyramid while its top is made up of other personalities, other "heroes". Instead of kings and generals, the monopolists and big businessmen are proclaimed to be the makers and the motive forces of history. Sigmund Diamond, an American economist, writes that "each society ... would create heroic types sufficient unto itself".¹ Industrial, commercial and financial tycoons, he claims, are the "heroes of our time" and it is they who have to be portrayed as "heroic personalities" and who merit admiration and ought to be worshipped.

Thus it is no longer historical personalities, but the entire exploiting upper crust of modern society called the *élite*, that is proclaimed to be the creative and guiding force of social development. The theory of the "*élite*", differing from the theory of the "heroes and the crowd" only in form, has a common ideological-theoretical basis—idealism and voluntarism—with it and pursues identical political goals—substantiation and justification of the concentration of economic wealth and state power in the hands of a narrow caste, the financial oligarchy.

But the power of the working masses and their influence on social life are so great and self-evident today that even the apologists of imperialism admit that the 20th century is the "age of the masses". That is why many of them now speak not so much about the "passivity" and "amorphousness" of the masses as about their "uncontrolled" activity, about the "predestined" role of the masses in history. They are particularly apprehensive of the fact that the popular masses are increasingly intruding into all spheres of public activity. Expressing fear of the popular masses who have risen to the full height of their giant stature, Sisley Huddleston, a British sociologist, writes: "There can be no doubt whatever, that, for better or worse, our own epoch is distinguished from preceding epochs by the overwhelming influence of the masses on

¹ Sigmund Diamond, *The Reputation of the American Businessman*, Cambridge, Mass., 1955, p. 1.

our communal life.”¹ He states further: “The salient factor in the unseen revolution, a revolution whose consequences are incalculable, is the breakdown of restraints on the functional character of the crowd...its action is felt stronger and stronger.”²

Admitting that the masses are exerting increasing influence on modern society, the proponents of such views, nevertheless, do not regard this as a law-governed phenomena arising from the entire course of social development, but as an “extraordinary” event, a “violation” of the normal historical process. They are recommending various recipes for bridling the growing activity of the masses. Some of them, speaking of the “threat” of the increasing intrusion of the masses into the affairs of state, recommend to “reconsider the problem of democracy” and establish “firm rule” of a strong personality. Others suggest to improve the system of guiding the masses, to make it more flexible and efficient and, at the same time, to give it a pseudo-democratic form. But all of them are seeking new efficient methods and means with which it would be possible to control the activity of the masses, deceive them and keep them in submission.

They preach subjectivism and voluntarism to theoretically substantiate the cult of leaders in the person of bourgeois politicians and financial tycoons who are still charged with the mission of saving capitalism. Society, they say, can develop in any direction depending on the will of one or another leader. The nations, writes William James, an American philosopher, “may be committed by kings and ministers to peace or war, by generals to victory or defeat, by prophets to this religion or that, by various geniuses to fame in art, science, or industry”.³

The idealist understanding of the role of the masses and the individual in history has both social and gnoseological roots.

The theoretical and cognitive roots of idealist views

¹ Sisley Huddleston, *Popular Diplomacy and War*, Rindge, New Hampshire, 1954, p. 145.

² *Ibid.*, p. 147.

³ William James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, New York, 1927, pp. 227-28.

of the role of the masses and the individual in history are connected with subjectivism and a metaphysical approach to reflecting social life, with selecting and absolutising one or another element of social reality and with a non-historical analysis of social phenomena.

In *The Holy Family* Marx and Engels wrote that theories which reject the role of the masses in history and which play up the cult of chosen personalities are merely a speculative result of the teaching of the juxtaposition of spirit and matter, they are the inevitable outcome of the idealist solution of the fundamental question of philosophy.

The idealist interpretation of history mirrors only superficial phenomena but does not delve into the essence of the historical process. The idealists see that people endowed with intellect and will who set themselves definite aims and struggle for their realisation are active in society, but beyond the activity of individuals, i.e., beyond the form in which historical laws manifest themselves, they fail to discern the essence of these laws.

The only way to avoid this error is to study those material driving forces which are reflected in men's minds as actuating motives. Moreover, when scientifically analysing these motives "it is not a question so much of the motives of single individuals, however eminent, as of those motives which set in motion great masses, whole peoples, and again whole classes of the people. . . ." ¹

The most important social prerequisite for ignoring the decisive role of the popular masses and, at the same time, for extolling the role of single individuals in social development is the rift between mental and manual labour.

In an exploiting antagonistic class society there is a profound contradiction between creative mental labour, which from the very outset became the privilege of the ruling classes, and physical labour, which is the forced obligation of the oppressed masses.

Since mental labour is turning into monopoly of the ruling exploiting classes, it is viewed as the principal, determining force of historical development, while physical labour is relegated to second place.

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 392.

With the further division of labour in society, the erroneous idea that mental labour is destined to dominate physical labour is consolidated by the class interests of the exploiters, by the very class nature of antagonistic society. Engels pointed out that "the more modest productions of the working hand retreated into the background, the more so since the mind that planned the labour already at a very early stage of development of society . . . was able to have the labour that had been planned carried out by other hands than its own".¹

Social inequality, exploitation of man by man and the oppressed condition of the working people in antagonistic society, played the decisive role in the formation of idealist views which deny or belittle the role of the masses in history. The social meaning of the process of "alienation" of the means of production from the producer, Engels underlined, was not only that the toiling masses became impoverished, but primarily that the means of production after they had passed into the hands of a big proprietor became means for exploiting and oppressing the working people.

The counterposing of single individuals and the masses, contempt for the working people and fear of their historical independence characteristic of modern bourgeois ideology, are rooted in the exploiting system itself, with its private ownership of the means of production and the resulting irreconcilable contradictions between the opposing classes. "I know nothing more rare than a fit scientific estimate and reverent appreciation of the People—of their measureless wealth of latent power and capacity,"² wrote Walt Whitman, an American poet and thinker.

The problem of the role of the masses in history could be correctly solved only from the standpoint of the most progressive and revolutionary class of the modern age, the working class, which is interested in an objective, scientific solution of this problem.

¹ Ibid., p. 87.

² Quoted from the book by Herbert Aptheker, *Laureates of Imperialism*, New York, 1954, p. 75.

2. Marxism-Leninism on the Content of the Concept "People" and the Mounting Role of the Masses in History

To correctly assess the role of the masses in history it is necessary to take into account the *class composition of a people and the objective historical conditions* in which it lives and acts.

Marxism-Leninism rejects an abstract way of posing this question.

The concept "people" should, above all, be considered from the standpoint of an analysis of the social and economic position of classes and strata in a particular system of production, from the standpoint of the doctrine of the class struggle, defining the objective place each class occupies in this struggle and the role it plays in it.

The tenet that production plays the decisive role in social development means that the *concept "people" above all else includes the toiling masses that are always the most important component of the productive forces*. Thus, the slaves and the peasants formed the nucleus of the masses in slave-owning society, the serfs and urban artisans in a feudal society, and the proletariat and the peasantry in capitalist society.

The classes that lead the people at different stages of revolutionary struggle are also different. Under capitalism the leading class is the proletariat. Marxism perceived that the proletariat was not only an oppressed and exploited mass but also the *most active and revolutionary force* capable of countering all forms of oppression and building a new, socialist society. "The chief thing in the doctrine of Marx," Lenin indicated, "is that it brings out the historic role of the proletariat as the builder of socialist society."¹

Marxists divide a people into classes not in order that the advanced class—the proletariat—should lock up within itself and wage but a narrow struggle for its own class interests, but so that it should struggle with greater energy and enthusiasm for the cause of all people and lead them in this struggle without being affected by the vacil-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 582.

lation and indecision of intermediate classes and strata. "In using the word 'people'," Lenin wrote, "Marx did not thereby gloss over class distinctions, but united definite elements capable of bringing the revolution to completion."¹

"People" is an historical concept embracing the classes and strata, which, due to their objective position, are interested in and are capable of participating in the solution of tasks of progressive development of society at a given historical period.

The main section of the masses in all socio-economic formations are the working people who are the direct producers of material and spiritual values.

In socialist society, where exploiting classes do not exist, socialist relations of production and a community of economic and political interests have become the basis of the socio-political and spiritual unity of workers, peasants and intellectuals, i.e., of the whole of society. Thus, with the victory of socialism the concept "popular masses" means the entire population. At the same time, the working class as the most progressive and organised force of socialist society fulfils its leading role with regard to other classes and strata also in the period of socialist and communist construction.

To assess the role of the masses in history from concrete historical positions it is necessary to take into account both the class composition of these masses and the objective historical conditions in which they act and which can either promote or fetter their creative activity. At all stages of history, the working masses are the *principal participant and the decisive force* of social development, and although they are always the makers of history, their activity depends on specific, objective historical conditions.

People create history in definite historical conditions, and the success of their creativity depends not only on the vigour and decision with which they act, but above all on the extent to which these conditions are conducive to victory. It is possible to understand why the struggle of the masses against their oppressors is unsuccessful in certain historical conditions and successful in others only

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 133.

on the basis of a thorough knowledge of the objective laws of economic development.

Marx established that "with the thoroughness of the historical action the size of the mass whose action it is will . . . increase".¹ This means that the deeper the social transformations in society, the more actively and consciously the masses must participate in their realisation.

The growing role played by the masses in the course of historical development is the result of the replacement of one socio-economic formation by another which gradually gave the masses broader opportunities to carry on their struggle.

Although the exploitation of the toiling people was not abolished but even became more intense as the mode of production evolved through its successive slave-owning, feudal and capitalist stages, the gradual personal emancipation of the working people gave them certain freedom of action, their class consciousness developed, their cultural level rose, and they acquired greater opportunities to fight for their rights against diverse forms of oppression. It is the working people that have always been and continue to be the basic social force capable of breaking down the resistance of the moribund classes that are withdrawing from the historical scene. Nothing serious, Lenin noted, was ever achieved in human progress anywhere in the world without the revolutionary activity of the working people. And, on the contrary, every defeat of the popular movements in history signified, as a rule, the onset of reaction, a deceleration of social development and even regress.

Today the working people of the capitalist countries have become a force no ruling class of exploiters can afford to disregard. The existence of the world socialist system vastly influences the working people of the capitalist countries; it makes them still more revolutionary-minded, inspires them to fight against imperialism and enormously facilitates the conditions in which they are waging this struggle.

The creative activity of the masses has grown immen-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique*, p. 110.

sely in countries that have cast off the yoke of colonialism. Lenin pointed out that the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which in the past could be viewed "merely as objects and not as the subjects of history",¹ have now awoke to independent life, to conscious struggle for their national and social emancipation. This has not only considerably swelled the masses that are consciously making history, but has also accelerated its development.

Today the increasing participation of the masses in historical development is concretely expressed also in their influence on international relations, on the fight against aggression and militarism for the preservation and strengthening of peace.

Addressing the American workers, Marx wrote in his time: "On you, then, devolves the glorious task to prove to the world that now at last the working classes are bestriding the scene of history no longer as servile retainers, but the independent actors, conscious of their own responsibility, and able to command peace where their would-be masters shout war."²

Today the cause of peace is in the hands of the mighty socialist community which has the material means of acting on the aggressive militarist circles; it is backed by the strength of the national liberation movement and the growing number of peace-loving states, by the might of the international working class and its vanguard and by the world peace movement. That the united actions of all peoples can today postpone and even prevent another world war is a result of the fundamental social changes that have taken place in the world and which have brought about a new balance of forces in it.

The results of the historical activity and the struggle of the masses depend not merely on objective conditions but on the subjective factor as well.

The founders of Marxism wrote that to be able to fulfil its historic mission, that of abolishing capitalism and building socialism, the proletariat needs more than just

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 478.

² *The General Council of the First International 1868-1870. Minutes*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, pp. 102-03.

numbers, which are only one of the factors making for a successful struggle. The proletariat will come out victorious in a revolutionary struggle only provided there are other such necessary conditions as vigorous action, political consciousness, unity and organisation in the activity of the working masses, and their guidance by a Marxist party equipped with a scientific knowledge of the laws of social development. "Numbers," wrote Marx, "weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge."¹

History has shown that the subjective factor—the level of the working people's class consciousness, the strength of their unity and the leadership of the masses by a revolutionary party—plays a very important role in the creative activity of the masses. The level of the development of the subjective factor markedly influences the growth, or, on the contrary, the decline of the role of the masses in social development. It was the low level of class consciousness, lack of their own political party and, consequently, absence of a clear understanding of the aims and directions of struggle that turned the masses who had risen to revolutionary action in the past into, as Lenin put it, "pawns in the hands of the ruling classes" which used the spontaneous popular movements to their own advantage. Though a great progressive force in historical development, the masses, whenever their leadership passed in to the hands of reactionary social elements, turned into an instrument of reaction and sided with the conservative forces. Therefore, the question of revolutionary leadership of the masses is extremely important.

"The more profound the change we wish to bring about," Lenin wrote, "the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary."²

The victory of the socialist revolution and the social changes following it constitute a qualitatively new stage in the creative role played by the masses. Compared with all preceding revolutions, a socialist revolution is the most profound and, consequently, the most popular of all social

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 384.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 498.

transformations. It brings new life to the formerly oppressed broadest lower social strata.

The fusion of the class interests of the proletariat with those of all the exploited people accounts for the unprecedented scale of the participation of the masses in a socialist revolution. As it solves previously unheard-of historic tasks, the socialist revolution draws a vast majority of the population into creative participation in effectuating social changes. Moreover, the part played by the working masses in revolutionary transformations does not diminish after they had won power, but, on the contrary, consistently and steadfastly increases. Socialism, Lenin wrote, "cannot be implemented by a minority, by the Party. It can be implemented only by tens of millions when they have learned to do it themselves."¹

The building of a new society is the result of the constantly growing conscious activity of the working people determined by the whole system of socialist economic, political and ideological relations. The conversion of the working people into conscious makers of a new life is an objective necessity for the successful construction of socialism and communism.

The profound social significance of a socialist revolution is that it removes all objective obstacles hampering the creative activity of the masses and which for centuries had impeded the development of their consciousness and energy.

Under socialism the toiling masses for the first time in history consciously effectuate historical transformations and become the conscious builders of a new society.

3. The Role of the Masses in the Development of Material Production

Recognition of the *decisive role of the masses* in history flows directly from the basic tenet of historical materialism that history of society rests on the development of production, while the *working masses remain the chief force of the production process as they have always been*. It is

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 135.

labour which produces the instruments of labour, food, housing, clothing, and so forth, that makes the existence of mankind, of social life possible. By their labour the masses feed and clothe all social strata and create the foundation for the advancement of science, technology and art.

Geologists have proved that imperceptible changes in the earth's crust ultimately bring about much more significant transformations than volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. In exactly the same way the insignificant changes in the instruments of labour introduced by millions of toilers over the centuries pave the way for great technical and social revolutions.

The everyday production activity of the toiling masses promotes social development at all stages in history, and determines the destiny of mankind to a much greater extent than do the activity and will of one or another outstanding personality. "Neither god, nor tsar, nor hero", but the masses with their strong hands and inventive mind, labour experience and work habits that are handed down from generation to generation, with their brave hearts and high moral qualities are the mainspring of historical progress. The day-to-day work of the millions not only provides society with all it needs but also creates the material basis for the successive replacement of socio-economic formations, for the promotion of social development.

That society cannot function without the labour of the masses is vividly proved by the strikes of workers in modern capitalist society. Suffice it for the workers to declare a general strike and the economic life of a country is paralysed, work at factories, mines, transport and electric stations comes to a standstill, newspapers do not come out and institutions and offices close.

The apologists of capitalism claim that the principal creative role in production is played by financial magnates. But since organisational functions in production are now being increasingly transferred to scientists and technicians, the parasitical nature of the capitalist class has become an obvious fact. "It is clear," writes Wyatt Marrs, an American sociologist, "that the owner himself, as such, adds nothing to the increased product"... "ownership within the institution of private property accordingly provides the only opportunity in the economic organisation

for complete and undisguised non-usefulness.... This entrenched privilege provides the most secure basis of parasitism in the modern world."¹

Elimination of this sort of parasitism creates conditions for tremendously accelerating social development. If the financial and industrial magnates were as essential to economic progress as claimed by their apologists, the abolition of the bourgeoisie would have stopped all progress. But in reality it is exactly the opposite. In countries where the bourgeois system has been abolished, where the bourgeois class no longer exists, economic development is incalculably faster than it had ever been before. Socialist reality fully overturns all the inventions of the bourgeois ideologists concerning the alleged "inability" of the masses to organise production and manage economy.

The working masses in social formations made up of antagonistic classes are alienated from the means of production, while in a socialist society there is no gap between the producer and the means of production, and the working people are their joint owners. The toiling people began to play a new role in the development of production following the abolition of private property and the establishment of public ownership of the means of production. Under socialism the people for the first time in history work for themselves and not for the exploiters, and therefore each person that works feels himself master of his country. Free labour stimulates the mighty creative energy of the working people. The economic foundation of the growing creative activity of the masses under socialism are the socialist production relations of friendship and co-operation which have appeared on the basis of public property.

This gives birth to a new attitude to labour which is strikingly revealed in socialist emulation. In the U.S.S.R. some 30,000,000 people are participating in the Work-the-Communist-Way Movement.

Labour in a socialist society is acquiring an increasingly creative character and the initiative of the masses acts as a powerful boost to technological progress. Today there

¹ Wyatt Marrs, *The Man on Your Back*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1958, pp. 162 and 165.

are 2,000,000 rationalisers and inventors in the U.S.S.R. In the past five years, workers and engineers have filed 11,000,000 rationalisation proposals. Free labour for the good of society, for oneself, fosters in the Soviet people such admirable qualities as inventiveness, initiative and collectivism. Gradually the natural concept of labour as an essential requirement takes shape in the minds of people.

The masses in a socialist society not only work, they also manage production. The socialist system draws ever wider sections of the working people into day-to-day participation in production management. Through standing production conferences nearly 5,000,000 people take a hand in solving problems of developing production and economic planning in the U.S.S.R.

Another new feature that appears under socialism is that the working people build their economic relations themselves. During the construction of socialism they actively participate in setting up new, socialist production relations on the basis of the nationalisation of industry, transport and the banks, and the collectivisation of agriculture.

In his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" Lenin wrote that in bourgeois revolutions the working people's main task had been to perform the negative, or destructive, work of abolishing feudalism and the monarchy, while the positive, or constructive work of organising the new society was carried out by the property-owning, bourgeois minority. In every socialist revolution, on the other hand, the main task of the proletariat and of the poor peasants which it leads, is the positive or "constructive work of setting up an extremely intricate and delicate system of new organisational relationships extending to the planned production and distribution of the goods required for the existence of tens of millions of people".¹

Economic planning under socialism is a vivid example of the harmonious combination of the activity of government organs with the broad initiative of the masses. The economic plan concretely mirrors the actual social and economic potentialities of the development of Soviet society at a given

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 241.

stage in history. These potentialities are sought for and taken into account both "at the top", by Party and government organisations—on a nation-wide scale, and "at the bottom", by the working people who study the possibilities and the reserves of each region, district and enterprise. On the basis of thorough analysis of economic potentialities and prospects, the working people and their local organisations produce their recommendations which, after being studied and co-ordinated, go to form the basis of a single national plan. Thus, economic plans in socialist countries in a concentrated form embody the collective intellect and experience of the working people, and take into account the will of the whole people.

Under socialism the activity of the masses is based on new relations of production, comradely co-operation and socialist mutual assistance, which provide full scope for the development of the productive forces, and in the first place of the main productive force—the working masses themselves, their creative energy and ability. The experience of socialist construction has completely exposed the bourgeois lie that socialism cannot evoke creative initiative in the economic field, that only capitalist competition can do this. The successes achieved by the working people in socialist countries provide the best evidence of what the people can do when they have cast off the capitalist yoke.

4. The Role of the Masses in Socio-Political Activity

The masses are the decisive force not only in the creation of material values; their activity also manifests itself in the *political life* of society. Under an exploiting system the masses are politically oppressed; the ruling classes in all manner of ways try to prevent them from participating in political life, and their role in this sphere in pre-socialist formations is therefore limited mainly to resisting the existing system, to the class struggle, which develops in various forms and exercises a definite influence on the policy of the ruling classes. In revolutionary periods, when the masses rise to conscious revolutionary activity, their role in politics is immeasurably enhanced. It is in these

periods that the people's abilities, their creativity, heroism and selflessness, come to the fore.

Bourgeois ideologists seek to prove that mass action by the working people or, as they contemptuously call it, "mob action", is a manifestation of "irrational instincts" and the "herd psychology". The French sociologist André Joussain, for instance, describing revolutions as "epidemic mass madness", claims that "revolution is to the social organism what disease is to the living organism. And like disease being an effort to cure an evil, it only aggravates the condition of that which it seeks to cure."¹

Fear of the people's revolutionary spontaneity has always been an attribute of the reactionaries because, as Marx pointed out, "they know that during the revolution the *ordinary folk* become daring and may go too far".²

In reality, social revolutions are periods when the activity and political consciousness of the broad masses of the working people, inspired with the idea of making history themselves, reaches a peak of intensity.

It is not "instincts" or the "herd psychology of the masses" that are the causes of revolutionary struggle but their realisation of the unequal position. It is in revolutions that the reason of the people displays itself most vividly.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism called revolutions the "locomotives of history" because they accelerate the course of historical developments. The changes that occur in social life in a relatively brief period of a revolution are more profound than the changes achieved in whole decades or even centuries of gradual, evolutionary "progress". The explanation of the powerful impact of revolutions on the course of history is that they raise millions of people to conscious participation in moulding events. "Revolutions are festivals of the oppressed and the exploited," Lenin wrote. "At no other time are the mass of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order, as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles."³

In all pre-socialist revolutions the fruits of victory went

¹ André Joussain, *La loi des révolutions*, Paris, 1950, p. 215.

² Marx and Engels, *Works*, Vol. 4, p. 314 (in Russian).

³ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 113.

not to the working people but to the exploiting classes which established new forms of exploitation to replace the old. But the historical results of revolutions have always been proportionate to the activity of the masses and the energy with which they pursued their independent demands.

This shows the untenability of the ideas of bourgeois ideologists who regard the growing activity of the masses as a social disaster and a threat to social progress. Just as in the sphere of production the working people are relegated to the status of dumb animals, so in the sphere of politics they, in the opinion of bourgeois ideologists, should obediently follow "acknowledged" leaders. "Leadership," according to the American sociologists J. Corry and H. Abraham, "is always the function of one or a few. Too many cooks spoil the broth, and what holds for soup holds for government as well."¹

"Democracy," writes the French sociologist René Gillouin, "is based on the false idea that politics is an easy thing accessible to all . . . and requiring no special knowledge."²

The supporters of democracy, however, certainly do not believe that politics is an "easy thing". The real point at issue is whether the people should be urged to participate in political activity or kept away from it, which is exactly what the reactionaries are striving to achieve. But experience has long since exploded the thesis that the masses are neither competent enough nor capable of participating in politics. Bourgeois democracy excludes a large section of society from active participation in politics; socialist democracy, on the contrary, creates the opportunity "for actually drawing the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people".³

The people's participation or non-participation in polit-

¹ J.A. Corry and Henry J. Abraham, *Elements of Democratic Government*, New York, 1958, p. 420.

² René Gillouin, *L'Homme moderne-boureau de lui-même*, Paris, 1951, pp. 25-26.

³ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 404.

ical activity does not depend on individual ability or on education. The deciding factor is the social conditions and opportunities which a particular social system offers them to display their activity and abilities in diverse fields.

In recent years much has been said in the West about the process of "depolitisation" of social life. Some sociologists juggle with statistics illustrating public passivity at elections, and cite opinion polls showing that interest in certain spheres of political life has declined. Charles Seely, an American sociologist, asserts that "people have but very little understanding of, or interest in, the world situation. . . . Fear also prevents them from taking an active part in movements that would improve their economic and social conditions".¹

In reality the public's indifference towards elections in some of the capitalist countries does not prove that the masses have lost interest in political life in general. It is only a form of protest against the reactionary policy of imperialist circles, against a system under which the political stage is held by rival bourgeois parties which virtually do not differ from one another since they represent only various groupings of monopoly capital. The very fact that the masses are shedding illusions, their disappointment in the bourgeois democracy and refusal to support the imperialists' reactionary political schemes by participating in them, is a step towards mass awakening, towards greater activity manifested most vividly in the strike movement, which increases year by year.

The working class, all progressive forces in the world are fighting with growing intensity against restrictions upon democracy, which hamper the creative initiative of the masses, and are striving to awaken and guide their political activity.

The socialist revolution is the highest manifestation of the creative activity of the masses in political life.

In the epoch of socialist revolution the working people not only destroy the old social system and its institutions; they also create a new system and build a new, socialist

¹ Charles S. Seely, *Philosophy and the Ideological Conflict*, New York, 1953, p. 214.

society that is free from oppression and exploitation. "Only the millions can build this society," Lenin said. "In the era of serfdom these builders numbered hundreds; in the capitalist era the builders of the state numbered thousands and tens of thousands. The socialist revolution can be made only with the active and direct practical participation of tens of millions in state administration."¹ It is the socialist revolution that arouses the working people to constant and active participation in state administration and the masses assume political power.

The socialist state system, socialist democracy is the political foundation of the steady growth of creative activity of the masses under socialism. The working people do not merely take part in production; they also play a decisive part in its organisation, in administering the country. The people's power becomes a reality here insofar as the people themselves actually govern and are the real masters of their life. Along with ownership of the land, factories, all natural resources and the instruments of production the working people also gain political power.

In the U.S.S.R. the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, being elective organs of the people's power, express through their activity the will of the working masses, effectuate their policy and defend their interests. The fact that more than 2,500,000 citizens of the U.S.S.R. are deputies of the Soviets and that over 20,000,000 people representing all sections of the population are permanent activists of the Soviets shows who governs the Land of Soviets, who is its master.

Under socialism the tens of millions of working people actively participate in state administration not only through government bodies but through the Party, trade unions, youth associations, literary, artistic and scientific societies, sports clubs and other mass organisations.

The imperialists and their ideologists regard the growth of the influence of the masses upon social life as a source of weakness of, and a direct threat to, the bourgeois state; under socialism, however, attitude to this question is completely different. "Our idea of strength is different," Lenin

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 426.

wrote. "Our idea is that a state is strong when the people are politically conscious. It is strong when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously."¹

Lenin believed that bringing the work of all organs of the state machinery to the knowledge of the public was an important measure furthering democracy. On the one hand, this facilitates control of the people over state authority and, on the other, instils in each member of society a sense of social responsibility, a realisation that he too is having a hand in all state affairs.

Communism cannot be built without drawing all members of society into the administration of public affairs, without teaching all the working people the methods and skills of administration, without further development of democracy.

5. The Role of the Masses in the Development of Spiritual Culture

Being the decisive force of economic and political progress, the masses also make a tremendous contribution to the development of *spiritual culture*. The people do not merely work and fight, they create. Science and art, which express the progressive ideas of their age, have their source in the life and experience of the people and in their very substance belong to the people.

"Art belongs to the people," said Lenin. "It must have its deepest roots in the broad mass of workers."²

The ideologists of the exploiting classes have always denied the ability of the masses to participate in the creation and development of culture. It is in this field that they most sharply contrast the "giftedness" of the select minority with the "sluggishness" of the ordinary people. Culture is a "spirit", and it always dwells in the heads of geniuses—such is the idealist pattern of the "philosophy of culture". "The masses," states René Gillouin, "have taken

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 256.

² Clara Zetkin, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, International Publishers, New York, 1934, p. 13.

no part in the creation of culture, either active or passive."¹

Condemning the "vulgar masses" for daring to intrude into the forbidden zone, Strausz-Hupé, an American sociologist, claims that they destroy culture just by touching it and that therefore "the Cult of the Elite calls upon the chosen few to defend the temple of culture against the barbarian-from-within".²

All these assertions flagrantly contradict reality and merely disclose their authors' refusal to perceive the real sources of the threat to modern culture and civilisation.

Due to its social nature capitalism turns artistic genius, all cultural achievements into commodities which are bought and sold. Business regards art above all as a means for deriving profit. Exposing the imperialists as the true enemies of culture Maxim Gorky wrote: "They bellow that the proletariat threatens to destroy culture, and they lie because they cannot but see that a great herd of fat men all over the world is trampling upon culture; they cannot but understand that the proletariat is the only force capable of saving culture, deepening and extending it."³

Marxism-Leninism does not in the least deny the role played by scientists, inventors and organisers of production in the economic development of society. But it also scientifically explains and shows that the very existence of mental workers and their entire activity are absolutely impossible without the material production carried on by the mass of the workers. The development of science and technology is by no means a product of "pure intellect" of geniuses which make their inventions allegedly independent of the requirements of production and social life. In reality sciences appear and develop on the basis of the generalisation of the experience of people and under the impact of the needs of production. It should be constantly borne in mind that a vast number of inventions and dis-

¹ René Gillouin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

² Robert Strausz-Hupé, *The Zone of Indifference*, New York, 1952, p. 128.

³ M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 26 (in Russian).

coveries in science and technology were made by the workers themselves, by born inventors. The first plough, loom, wheel, axe, windmill, cart, and so forth—are all the results of collective work, of the creative activity of many generations of toilers.

The economic development of any country was determined by the development of farming, crafts, stock raising and industry which was based on the labour of the masses. It was the labour of slaves that at a certain stage of social development provided the opportunities for freeing part of society from physical labour to engage in science, technology and art. This is acknowledged not only by Marxists.

"Throughout the ages," wrote Rabindranath Tagore, "civilised communities have contained groups of nameless people. They are the majority—the beasts of burden, who have no time to become men. They grow up on the leavings of society's wealth, with the least of food, least clothes and least education, and they serve the rest. They toil most, yet theirs is the largest measure of indignity.... They are like a lampstand bearing the lamp of civilisation on their heads: people above receive light while they are smeared with trickling oil."¹

The entire spiritual culture of mankind has its roots and foundation in the life of people. They provide the sap and give content to all that is best in world culture. Their life, struggle, feelings and aspirations are the fertile soil from which progressive artists draw their inspiration, themes and characters, and the ideological purposefulness of their works. Precisely this made Maxim Gorky conclude that "the people are not only the force which creates all material values, they are the sole and inexhaustible source of spiritual wealth, the first philosopher and poet in time, beauty and creative genius".²

The people create not only the artistic images in classical art, they also create the language with which this art is composed. Were it not for the creation and constant improvement of human speech cultural development of society would have been altogether impossible. Language,

¹ Rabindranath Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, Calcutta, 1960, p. 1.

² M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 26 (in Russian).

by means of which scientific data and poetic images are expressed and recorded, is created by the people, and developed by them throughout the centuries of their history.

Recognition of these propositions in no way belittles the importance of the individual, of the outstanding thinkers and gifted artists. It would be absurd to deny that science is developed by scientists, and that art is created by artists, whose creative individuality, ability, artistic talent and professional skill tremendously influence the cultural development of society.

But from where do the aims and ideals which the artist seeks to express in his work spring from? There is no doubt that in the final count they are engendered by society and the epoch. The artist is himself a product of specific social relations, and his aesthetic views are a reflection of social conditions. The individual traits of an artistic talent always mirror the characteristic features of a particular society, class or epoch which shape the artist's personality.

In exploiting societies the working people have only limited access to education, science and culture. The forced physical labour has been the lot of the people over the great part of their history, and their participation in the development of culture was primarily expressed in the creation of the material conditions of spiritual life. They managed to acquire knowledge only to the extent required by the development of production and the degree of access to culture which they won by their organised struggle. As Maxim Gorky expressed it, socialism's historical service to humanity is that it "has restored to the whole mass of the working people a right of which they have been deprived all over the world, the right to develop their intellect, talents and abilities".¹

By breaking the fetters of economic and spiritual slavery, the socialist revolution ends the exploiting classes' monopoly of culture and makes all cultural wealth and knowledge the property of the people. "In the old days," Lenin wrote, "human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture,

¹ M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 331 (in Russian).

and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation."¹

Socialism gave the masses broad opportunities to exercise their creative powers in the cultural life of society. The working people are playing a qualitatively new role in the development of culture under conditions of socialism; having gained wide access to education and culture as a whole they for the first time in history create their own, socialist culture, which is truly of the people in both its content and functions. To create a new, socialist culture the intellectuals required a steady and abundant flow of new, creative talent. A working socialist intelligentsia whose ranks are swelled by yesterday's workers and peasants, by the most able and gifted part of the working people comes into being in the course of the cultural revolution.

Unhampered access to knowledge, science and universal education under socialism sets the working people on the path of untrammelled, all-round development of their abilities and talents, makes them fully equipped builders of the new, socialist culture.

Marx and Engels wrote that the Communists did not believe in miracles and did not claim that in the new society anyone could become a Raphael. But each person, they said, would be able freely to develop his abilities. To create the social conditions in which anyone will be able to realise his gifts and abilities is undoubtedly a complex but also the most rewarding and impressive goal that mankind has ever set itself. This goal is being achieved in practice today by the peoples of the countries that have taken the path of socialism.

6. The Role of the Individual in History

While Marxism-Leninism recognises that the masses play the decisive role in history and regards the people as

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 481-82.

the makers of history, it does not deny the role played by the individual in history. The claims that Marx's theory leaves no place for the role of the individual in history is vilification of Marxism. It was Marxism which, having discovered the laws of development of society, gave the first scientific explanation of the actual role the individual plays in history. Marxism does not deny the role of the individual but merely the anti-scientific, idealist understanding of that role which views the activity of great men as the principal or even the sole motive force of social development, and credits them with the ability to direct the course of history at will. Plekhanov said that such an approach to history creates an "optical illusion", in which the individual overshadows the epoch which gave him birth. The idealists, he said, regarded history "from the point of view of the feats of such individuals as Romuluses, Augustuses or Brutuses. The mass of the people, all those whom the Augustuses or Brutuses oppressed or liberated, escaped their field of vision."¹ The inability to rise above the actions of individuals to the actions of the masses, to the actions of whole social classes, to understand and scientifically explain the law-governed character of social development—all this is characteristic of idealist conceptions of history.

What is the actual role of the individual in history? What determines the emergence of great men? What guides their activity?

Approaching history superficially and taking into account only the features that strike the eye, it is quite easy to be deluded into thinking that the emergence of great men is the chief cause of historical events. This is the error of the idealists, who maintain that there have been periods in history when great men were needed and which remained periods of stagnation and produced nothing of importance because the great men failed to appear. Even the utopian socialists had believed that socialism was not the necessary result of the law-governed development of capitalism and the revolutionary struggle of the working class, but the accidental discovery of an "individual genius", and that it could have been brought about long ago

¹ G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. XXIV, p. 263 (in Russian).

if only there had been a person capable of inventing and proclaiming the new social system.

In reality the emergence of great men is not a chance event; they are a product of history. Before influencing the course of history, they themselves are subject to the influence of their own historical epoch. It is not accidental, for example, that outstanding statesmen usually come to the fore at the turning points in history, during periods of major activity of the masses: social revolutions, national liberation movements and popular uprisings. History shows that when there is an objective need for distinguished historical figures, this stimulates their appearance. "That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance," wrote Engels. "But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon, just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by the fact that the man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc."¹

Regarding great men as a product of definite historical social conditions and needs, Marxism-Leninism does not deny that chance events in history have an effect on the course of social development. An outstanding individual is a product not only of historical circumstances but also of the individual conditions influencing the formation of his personality, and also influencing the emergence of the kind of man who is needed to carry out certain socially essential tasks, and the degree to which he is able to perform these tasks. In relation to world history, to the general laws and the motive forces of the social development, the individual qualities of a historical figure are not, of course, decisive, but they, nevertheless, do leave a definite stamp on the course of historical events, which they either accelerate or slow down. In a letter to Kugelman about the Paris Commune, Marx wrote: "World history would

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 505.

indeed be very easy to make, if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would on the other hand be of a very mystical nature, if 'accidents' played no part. These accidents naturally form part of the general course of development and are compensated by other accidents. But acceleration and delay are very much dependent upon such 'accidents', including the 'accident' of the character of the people who first head the movement."¹

So the emergence of outstanding individuals cannot be regarded either as a pure necessity or as a pure accident; necessity and chance are here interwoven. The general course of history, its main direction, does not depend on the individual, no matter how brilliant. Not even the most outstanding personality can change the general direction of history. "It is the sovereigns who in all ages have been subject to economic conditions, but they have never dictated laws to them."²

But even if the greatest of men cannot change the course of history, this does not mean that his influence on the development of historical events is negligible. On the contrary, his activity under certain conditions may exert a tremendous influence on these events.

What are these conditions? Why have some people left their mark on history, while others have expended their energy vainly endeavouring to change the course of events?

In making a scientific study of the role of the individual in history it is imperative to ascertain the conditions under which the activity of an outstanding individual will be successful. The significance of his historical activity depends mainly on how well he understands the basic needs of social development and the conditions that will satisfy these needs, on how close his activities are bound up with the struggle of the masses, classes and parties. A great man, Plekhanov said, is he who sees further than others, desires more strongly than others, and who expresses the vital needs of his age. Moreover, the more profoundly he understands the direction of historical development and

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 264.

² Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 72.

the more he strives to act in that direction, the more significant and effective will be his influence upon history.

Although repudiating the idealist notion that outstanding personalities can make history at will, Marxism acknowledges not only the immense significance of the creative activity and revolutionary energy of the masses but also of the initiative of individuals, of outstanding people, and also of organisations and parties, which can establish close links with the progressive class, with the masses, awaken their consciousness, show them the correct path of struggle and help them to organise. "Not a single class in history," Lenin wrote, "has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it."¹

Without capable and energetic leaders the leading class cannot win political supremacy, nor hold and consolidate its power and successfully fight against its political opponents.

As history has demonstrated, different types of leaders emerged on the scene at different times depending on the character of the age and of the classes which promote them. Every class, as a rule, produces a certain type of leader which fits its social character. What is more, one and the same class may at various periods in its development have leaders of different types. We know, for instance, that when capitalism was in its cradle and the bourgeoisie was still an ascending class, fighting for social changes that were progressive for that period, there was a galaxy of outstanding political leaders and thinkers, "giants of thought and action", whose names have gone down in world history. When bourgeois society became established, however, and the interests of the bourgeoisie entered into irreconcilable contradiction with the interests of the masses, a reactionary type of leader became characteristic of the bourgeois class. The reactionary nature and anti-humanism of the contemporary bourgeoisie as a social class is matched by the reactionary character of its ideologists and leaders. The bourgeoisie today is no longer led by the type of great men it produced in the days of its youth. As Marx wrote in his review of François Guizot's

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 370.

pamphlet, *Why did the English Revolution Succeed?*, it is not only kings that depart but the talents of the bourgeoisie also. The stamp of degeneration lies not only on the contemporary reactionary bourgeoisie as a class but also on its leaders.

On the other hand, the progressive movements of our day—the working-class struggle, the national liberation movement—give birth to really outstanding people. The proletarian revolution is the greatest and most profound social transformation in history. In it the working class has to perform the greatest task in the history of mankind—to put an end to all exploitation and make the momentous step from the pre-history of mankind to genuinely human history. It is not surprising, therefore, that the proletariat's struggle produced a new type of leaders, organisers and thinkers far more brilliant than any the world had ever known.

As the role of the masses in history grows, so does the role of the leaders of popular movements. The demands which the leaders of mass revolutionary movements have to live up to steadily increase as social life becomes more and more involved. The greater the activity of the masses in history, the more urgent the need for experienced and mature leaders.

Exposing the subjective-idealist, metaphysical confusion over the question of the people, the interrelation between masses, classes, parties and leaders, Lenin wrote in his book, *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder*: "It is common knowledge that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted with classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social system of production, with categories holding a definite status in the social system of production; that as a rule and in most cases—at least in present-day civilised countries—classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are run by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions, and are called leaders."¹

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 41.

Since organisation is the chief means by which the working class solves its problems, the role of leaders, of ideologists in the revolutionary movement of the working class is particularly great.

A splendid quality of the leaders of the working class is that their entire theoretical and organisational activity is indissolubly bound up with the advanced party and the working class, with all the people who work. The strength of the working-class leaders lies in their close ties with the broad masses, in their faith in the limitless creative abilities of the working people, in their faculty to draw upon their experience and wisdom. The truly popular leader must be selflessly devoted to the revolutionary cause and possess abundant practical experience of the revolutionary struggle.

Marx, Engels and Lenin were endowed with these qualities to the full. They had outstanding powers in the theoretical field, brilliant organisational ability, resolution and daring, an unshakeable inner conviction of the justness of the working-class cause, a love of the people and an inextinguishable hatred of the people's enemies. They were closely linked with the masses, they taught them and they learned from them, generalising their great revolutionary experience.

Recognition of the outstanding role of leaders, who are capable of organising and directing the movement of the masses, has nothing in common with superstitious worship of figure-heads, with attempts to place leaders above the Party. The personality cult, which attributes the cause of historical events to the will of an outstanding personality, is organically alien to Marxism-Leninism.

Marx and Engels had repeatedly pointed out that no personality cult should ever be allowed to develop around any political leader, however great his services. Lenin also waged a relentless struggle against the anti-Marxist conception of "the hero and the crowd". He said that "the minds of tens of millions of those who are doing things create something infinitely loftier than the greatest genius can foresee".¹

A personality cult belittles the role of the Party, and

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 474.

leads to a decline in the creative activity of the Party masses, of all the working people. It is incompatible with collective leadership, which is the highest principle of Party leadership. Lenin resolutely opposed the slightest manifestation of hero-worship and frequently warned the Party against excessive praise of individual leaders and blind worship of them.

Rejecting the personality cult, Marxism-Leninism at the same time resolutely opposes anarchistic negation of all authority and disregard for the great organising role played by leaders. The relations between the leaders and the working people rest on mutual trust and common fidelity to the great cause of fighting imperialism and of building socialist society.

Experienced leaders, steeled in revolutionary battles, have the support of the wide masses. They generalise their experience and, despite all difficulties and dangers, skillfully effectuate the policy which is consistent with the interests of the working man.

* * *

The role played by the masses and the individual in history is the subject of sharp ideological controversy in the modern world. The champions of imperialism invent all sorts of anti-scientific conceptions to justify the division of society into a "ruling élite" and the "subordinate mass", to divorce the working people from active political and social activity and thus save the crumbling capitalist system. "The remaining problem," writes Irving Horowitz, an American historian, "is to show the business class how to avoid the same dismal fate, as the nobility."¹

The ideologists of imperialism cannot conceal their fear of the masses and of the Marxist teaching which inspires them. Revealing the class essence of bourgeois theories, the Swiss sociologist Paul Reiwald admits that "they are aimed against the communist doctrine on the role of the people in history, which has given the masses confidence in their strength".²

¹ I. Horowitz, *Science and Society*, New York, 1956, Vol. XX, No. 1, p. 8.

² Paul Reiwald, *De l'esprit des masses*, Paris, 1959, p. 367.

However, the historic successes of the Soviet people and of all peoples who have taken the path of socialist construction, have dealt a crushing blow at the old prejudice that only the so-called upper classes, only the exploiters and those who serve them, can govern the country, manage industry and promote science and culture. The socialist system, having immeasurably increased the might of the peoples and having shown them new sources of strength, has demonstrated that the toiling masses are capable not only of assimilating all the achievements of human intellect but also of raising the economy, democracy, science and culture to a higher level.

Supported by the finest force in the world, the force of workers and peasants, socialism is multiplying its strength and is becoming more and more a factor determining the course of historical development.

Chapter VIII

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS FORMS

Social life is the most involved sphere of the material world. Alongside material-economic and socio-political phenomena it includes diverse spiritual phenomena, or that which Marxism defines by the concept "social consciousness". This chapter discusses social consciousness, describes its structure and sources and the role it plays in historical development, and deals with the specific features of individual forms of social consciousness and other related problems.

1. Social Psychology and Ideology. Social Consciousness as a Reflection of Social Being

A scientific analysis of social consciousness, of its essence and structure should be based on Marx's proposition that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness".¹ This means that social consciousness depends on social being which engenders and determines it. In origin and content *social consciousness is a reflection of social being, of the material basis of society.*

Social consciousness is one of those categories which are usually called the "broadest possible" in philosophy. It includes all forms of reflecting reality in man's thinking, above all social ideas, theories, political and legal views,

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 363.

moral, aesthetic and philosophical opinions, religious ideas, and so forth. The sphere of social consciousness also embraces social sentiments, moods, human customs and manners, established traditions and the psychological make-up of a particular nation or nationality.

Historical materialism divides this big and intricate sphere of society's spiritual life according to its structure into two different yet closely connected fields—*social psychology and ideology*.

Social psychology is that part of social consciousness in which the immediate conditions of the life of men are reflected. It is a sphere of social sentiments, moods, concepts, emotions as well as of illusions, prejudices and traditions that are moulded under the impact of everyday life of men and on the basis of their practical experience and personal observations. Thus, social psychology is the consciousness of vast masses and their direct mental reaction to the surrounding reality.

The specific historical conditions, in which nations, nationalities, classes and social groups live, engender a particular type of social psychology. People living in a particular socio-economic formation have a specific socio-psychological constitution which is formed on the basis of given socio-economic conditions. Antonio Labriola, a prominent Italian Marxist, graphically called this "Egyptian world, Greek consciousness, spirit of the Renaissance, dominant ideas, psychology of nations, of society or of classes".¹ There is every reason to speak of the psychological make-up of nations and nationalities which appears on the basis of specific historical conditions of their development. When we examine class-differentiated society, however, the principal thing is that social psychology has a *class character*.

The material conditions of the existence of classes and social groups are different. Each class occupies a definite place in the system of relations of production and has its own, inherent interests. Consequently, the life of various classes is different and their direct impressions of the social environment are unlike. It follows therefore, that

¹ Antonio Labriola, *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History*, Translated by Charles H. Kerr, Chicago, 1908, p. 220.

men's thoughts and feelings, their notions and moods, in a word their social psychology, are socially determined and are of a class nature. This is frequently expressed in such concepts as "class intuition" and "class instinct". Marx wrote in *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: "Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations."¹

Thus, the condition of the proletariat under capitalism breeds in the former a hatred for oppression and makes it conscious of the need to fight to improve its position. The joint struggle against capitalism and joint labour at large enterprises give rise to such traits as collectivism, proletarian solidarity, unity and organisation. The psychology of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is characterised by individualism and money-making which are the result of capitalist property, competition and bourgeois social relations. The dual position of the petty bourgeoisie under capitalism accounts for its political instability and vacillation from submissiveness to "Left" revolutionarism and adventurism. The socialist social system, which rests on public ownership of the means of production and relations of comradesly co-operation between the working people by its very mode of life develops a new psychology, new thoughts, moods, sentiments and traits of character in men. The socialist social psychology with its sense of collectivism, humanism and internationalism is the complete anti-thesis of bourgeois psychology.

Social psychology occupies the biggest place in the sphere of social consciousness. What makes social psychology limited in character is that it expresses the interests of a given class still vaguely and rudimentarily and develops more spontaneously than consciously. Expressing chiefly the everyday and immediate interests of a class it does not rise to a realisation of the material and political conditions as conditions of the existence of a class as a

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 272.

whole, to an understanding of the basic tasks and prospects of a particular class or society.

At this stage social views, sentiments, opinions and moods of men are still expressed insufficiently clearly and have not reached scientific lucidity and full theoretical elaboration. Being the first and lowest phase of cognition of social reality, social psychology cannot be the basis for solving historical problems, for transforming social relations. Nevertheless, despite its limited nature, social psychology plays a big part in historical development. Noting the significance of the psychological factor in the history of spiritual culture Plekhanov wrote: "Since we have to take it into account already in the history of political institutions, not a step can be made without it in the history of literature, art, philosophy, and so forth."¹

Problems of social psychology have an important bearing on the activity of progressive social forces. In organising the working masses for the struggle against reaction and imperialist oppression, they should thoroughly study social sentiments and moods of the different groups of working people—of the various sections of the working class, peasantry, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie—and rally and unite them for the common struggle. They should take into account not only the psychological peculiarities of different social groups, but also the influence they exert on each other, as well as the immense power of traditions in the sphere of social psychology.

Another, higher stage of social consciousness is *ideology*. Ideology is a system of ideas, views and theoretical principles, reflecting (either correctly or incorrectly) social economic relations from the standpoint of a definite social class.

It would be a mistake to absolutise the difference between ideology and social psychology, insofar as in actual life they are united and interconnected. Both have the same basis—social being, the status of different classes and social groups in the system of social relations. To a certain extent ideology absorbs, finds the purport of and processes social sentiments, moods and concepts. In their

¹ G. V. Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. II, p. 248 (in Russian).

turn social ideas and theories exert a great impact on the formation and development of ordinary consciousness. The ideology which dominates a particular society uses all the means at its disposal to influence the psychology of the oppressed class and strives to reconcile it with the existing social relations. This is especially manifest in our "age of mass communications" when the press, radio, television, cinema and other powerful ideological media are employed to influence the consciousness of men.

By conditionally dividing social consciousness into social psychology and ideology, we speak of its different stages—the ordinary and the theoretically formulated consciousness. One cannot fail to see that in the general structure of social consciousness these two stages are actually divided. The ascertainment of the distinctions between them has a profound theoretical meaning as well as revolutionary-practical significance. *First*, although the psychology of classes does exert a great influence on the appearance and development of social ideas and theories, it is not its only source. Social ideas and theories above all reflect actual social relations and processes, and class interests. *Second*, the distinctive feature of ideology is that in it ideas and views acquire an integral and theoretically elaborated character, the character of ideological systems and conceptions. Because ideology is a systematised and theoretically substantiated reflection of social being from the positions of definite social classes, it does not arise spontaneously, nor is it evolved by a whole class; it is created by ideologists, or to quote Lenin "the thinking representatives of a class". The ideological representatives of a class, Marx said, theoretically deduce the conclusions at which their class arrives in practice. Marxist ideology arose and developed not from the ordinary, spontaneous consciousness of the working class, but from science. "Socialism," wrote Lenin, "as the ideology of the class struggle of the proletariat, is subject to the general conditions governing the inception, development, and consolidation of an ideology; in other words, it is founded on the sum total of human knowledge."¹

Ideology, being a higher rung of social consciousness,

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 163.

reflects social relations and their contradictions with greater clarity and theoretical understanding. Definite ideas, views and theoretical principles are expressed in ideology not in a scattered but in a systematised form, and are more comprehensive and purposeful in character. In its essence ideology synthesises the radical, decisive interests, aims and tasks of one or another social class, which are connected either with the consolidation and development of existing social relations or with their overthrow. And insofar as ideology in its form has a conceptualistic, theoretically elaborated character, it differentiates into various forms: political and legal theories, moral and aesthetic views, philosophical doctrines, etc., which in turn reflect specific aspects of social being. Ideology is usually understood as a sum total of political, moral, philosophical, aesthetic and other ideas reflecting the interests, aims and tasks of a particular social class, and in a socialist society, those of the whole people.

If ideology is based not on casual or ordinary, but on fundamental and decisive problems of social relations, then, in comparison with social psychology, its impact on historical development of society proves to be more decisive. It also plays the leading role in the general sphere of social consciousness. Figuratively speaking ideology forms the core of the entire content of social consciousness and influences the whole spiritual life of society with greater theoretical profundity and conclusiveness.

When examining social consciousness as an intricate, multifaceted structure, attention should also be paid to the correlation between social (collective) and individual consciousness.

People's consciousness is always social in character. It is a social product and remains as such as long as people exist. But while stressing the social character of consciousness, historical materialism does not negate the individual peculiarities of human thinking and psyche, i.e., the specific features of individual psychology.

Marxism holds that there is no social consciousness independent of its concrete vehicles, or living individuals. It is impossible to imagine social consciousness as a sort of a mythical being hovering over society in the form of "universal consciousness", a "national spirit" as philos-

ophers-idealists Schelling and Fichte claim. It does not exist independently of society, classes or individuals. Individual consciousness is the spiritual world of a personality, the views, concepts and moods of a *given* individual, which are formed under the influence of personal life or conditions in which a personality is moulded and brought up, and also of individual peculiarities. But it cannot be limited by the spiritual world of an individual, and in its ideological content is an expression of the social, class consciousness. The social is constantly transformed into the individual and is implemented through living people, definite personalities, while the individual, in its turn, uninterruptedly becomes socialised. The individual and the social exist only in one another and one through the other.

The correlation between the social and the individual consciousness thus reveals the dialectics of the individual and universal, the many-sided spiritual bond between the individual and society. This dialectical unity, however, does not preclude contradictions. There are cases when the ideas and views of an individual do not coincide and even contradict the corresponding views of a class or social group. Members of one or another class may have individual peculiarities in their manner of thinking due to the specifics of their upbringing and the diverse political and ideological influences to which a person has been subjected all his life. There are numerous known instances of some members of the ruling exploiting class abandoning the positions of the class to which they had belonged by virtue of their social origin, and adopting the positions of the working people. But it also often happens that people, who by their social origin belong to the working class, fall into the orbit of bourgeois ideas, betray their class, become the vehicles of bourgeois ideology and desert to the camp of its enemy—the bourgeoisie (for instance, the reactionary leaders of Right-wing Social-Democracy, leaders of some trade unions in the capitalist countries).

The Marxists-Leninists orientate themselves in their ideological work primarily on the consciousness of large groups of working people, raising it to the level of the advanced sections of the working class. But they also attach great significance to individual propaganda and agitation.

Thus, we have examined the sphere of social consciousness from the point of view of its structure and the various levels of correlation between social psychology and ideology, and social and individual consciousness. But it is no less important scientifically to ascertain the *sources* of social ideas, their *origin and development*. This is one of the cardinal problems of historical materialism, and it has to be fully apprehended before it will be possible correctly to understand the Marxist doctrine of the role of ideas in the history of social development and the laws governing the ideological process in general and the development of different forms of social consciousness, in particular. On all these issues pre-Marxist philosophers and sociologists adhered to idealist views. The proponents of avowedly theologic trends depicted the ideas and theories of the ruling classes as divine commands, as expression of divine reason. Hegel, an objective idealist, considered that in the course of history ideas developed in their own bosom through their own negation. His "*Philosophy of the Spirit*" is the sum total of political, legal, moral, philosophical and other ideas which he treats as stages in the development of the "Absolute Idea". Other philosophers and sociologists saw the source of social views and theories exclusively in the thinking of ideologists.

It follows therefore that idealist philosophers contend that social consciousness develops and moves due to its own force, that it springs from itself and therefore is the product of thinking itself. The origin and development of social ideas is viewed as a simple filiation of ideas, in the process of which new ideas rise from the preceding ones through gemmation. Juridical ideas may flow from juridical ones, religious from religious and philosophical from preceding philosophical views. Each form of social consciousness, the idealists hold, follows its own line of development which is independent of society's material life. The assertions of the idealists about the absolute independence of ideas, their complete separation from the material life of society, economic relations and the class struggle provide no opportunity scientifically to explain the sources of social consciousness and the role it plays in social development. On the contrary, they cultivate the

illusion that ideas create social reality, the entire history of the people.

In contrast to these perverted conceptions, Marxism has scientifically proved that the source of social ideas and theories should be sought not in the abstract sphere of pure thinking but in material life and that social consciousness appears and develops on the basis of social being. "Consciousness," Marx wrote, "must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production."¹

The material conditions of the life of society, economic relations and the position of classes are the basic causes determining social consciousness, for these factors define the interests of men, pose problems before them and give social consciousness definite purposefulness. Social ideas, sentiments and conceptions are the subjective expression of men's objective interests. If they cease to correspond to the actual interests of classes and social groups, they lose their former significance and are ousted by new ideas and conceptions which are more consistent with the real interests of people. "The '*idea*,'" wrote Marx, "always disgraced itself insofar as it differed from the '*interest*.'"²

In content and specific forms social consciousness is historical. There is none and cannot be any supra-historical or supra-human social consciousness in the form of mythical "national spirit" or "world reason"; there is only the consciousness of a definite historical epoch. With the establishment of capitalist society the dominant ideas, conceptions and moods of the epoch of the feudal-estate system gave way to others because of the revolutionary change in society's relations of production caused by the replacement of the old social formation by a more progressive one. The victory of socialism and the emergence and development of a qualitatively new, socialist social consciousness created the profoundest change in all spheres of social consciousness.

Hence, social ideas and conceptions change together with

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 363.

² K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique*, p. 109.

the changes in the economic basis of society. Political, legal, moral, philosophical, aesthetic and religious views and theories in their principal content reflect the society's economic basis. "Just as man's knowledge reflects nature," Lenin wrote, "(i.e., developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (i.e., his various views and doctrines—philosophical, religious, political and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society."¹ Lenin always noted, however, that the reflection of social being in social consciousness was not a mechanical act, but a complex dialectical process. Social being does not directly determine ideological forms, it does so mostly indirectly and only in the final count. There are the class struggle in society, political relations, state and legal superstructure, national interrelations, and other intermediate links between economic relations and the ideological superstructure. Ideological reflection presupposes dialectical interaction of the object and the subject, in which not only economy influences ideology, but ideology also influences economic relations. Characterising the specific features of the spiritual development of society, Engels wrote: "Here economy creates nothing anew, but it determines the way in which the thought material found in existence is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly."²

Some philosophers and sociologists present materialist interpretation of history in a deliberately vulgarised and exaggerated form as "economic materialism". They assert, for instance, that historical materialism allegedly reduces the whole spiritual development of society to a material process and views complex ideological conceptions as an automatic reflex of economic relations. The founders of Marxism had always opposed the vulgar sociological interpretation of the history of spiritual culture. Marx noted in *Capital* that it is easier to reduce spiritual phenomena to their earthly core, than to deduce from this core the intricate system of spiritual relations which form a kaleidoscopic, sometimes odd and even fantastic picture. But to understand the laws of society's spiritual development it

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 25.

² Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 495.

is necessary in the long run to follow this difficult road of deducing the phenomena of spiritual life from its material foundations. "The latter method," Marx wrote, "is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific one."¹

Deduction of corresponding ideological forms from particular relations of real life entails a profound concrete analysis of historical periods and formations, an analysis of the historical regularities and relations peculiar to these formations, and of the interaction of the different aspects of social life. Consequently, to grasp the ideology of a given historical epoch it is necessary to ascertain the nature of its economic relations, the class struggle and the political relations in society, the interaction of all ideological forms and the state of the spiritual culture as a whole.

Lenin repeatedly came out against vulgar sociology in explaining social ideas and the history of spiritual culture. In this connection he made some interesting remarks in V. Shulyatkov's book *Justification of Capitalism in West European Philosophy from Descartes to E. Mach*. A pupil of Bogdanov, who was a disciple of Mach, Shulyatkov deduced all philosophical doctrines of the new times—the systems of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant and those of the English and French materialists—directly from the stages of capitalist production, from the state of the productive forces. He regarded "matter", "substance", "idea" and other philosophical concepts as nothing more than conventional signs for denoting classes and social groups in bourgeois society. Lenin characterises these exercises in vulgarisation as "ridiculous", "absurd", "empty phrases" and "a caricature of materialism in history".² At the same time Lenin showed how to analyse ideological phenomena scientifically and materialistically. In the progressive philosophical theories of the past, which, in the social respect, had an historical significance in the struggle against moribund social relations, Lenin underscored all instances of objective truth and scientific cognition of reality.

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 373.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 502.

2. Class Character of Social Consciousness. Scientific and Unscientific Ideology

In a class society, social ideas are always of a class nature. Each social class works out its own system of views which express its position, interests and needs. Thomas Hobbes, a 17th century materialist philosopher, wrote in the period of the English bourgeois revolution that if geometric axioms went contrary to the interests of men they probably would have been refuted.¹ Quoting Hobbes, Lenin stressed that, however abstract or veiled, the ideological struggle in a class society is a clash between the contradictory and generally irreconcilable interests of the opposing classes. Ideas have always reflected "the needs, interests, strivings, and aspirations of a certain class".²

The reflection of social being in social consciousness in a society divided into opposing classes is always of a class nature. The ideas and theories of different classes in their own way reflect economic relations and social reality. The history of ideologies shows that in their doctrines the spokesmen of the classes which are leaving the historical scene have usually distorted the course and the prospects of social development and defended the obsolete and the reactionary. Ideologists of the progressive classes strove correctly to interpret social relations and expressed views and theories which promoted the historical progress. But in the pre-Marxist period members of progressive classes, owing to their class narrow-mindedness, were unable to create a consistently scientific social theory which could become the foundation for the revolutionary remaking of society. This was done only by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, ideologists and leaders of the proletariat.

It is clear, therefore, that the class character and social conditionality of ideology are not an "invention" of Marxism, as its opponents claim, but rest on an objective foundation. If economic relations of society, Engels notes, "present themselves in the first place as *interests*"³, this means

¹ See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*, p. 68.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 434.

³ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 622.

that the economic material interests of a class are reflected in its political, legal, philosophical and other doctrines and theories. Two diametrically opposite ideologies reflecting the views of the exploiting and the oppressed classes are clearly discernible in a society consisting of antagonistic classes. But in any epoch the dominating ideology is that of the class that holds dominating economic and political positions. "The class," wrote Marx and Engels, "which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force."¹ The class which possesses the means of material production and wields political authority dictates its world outlook to society with the help of all the available means of ideological influence: schools, the Church, the press, works of art, radio and television. The bourgeois ideology, dominant under capitalism, is opposed by the ideology of the proletariat, which is scientifically and theoretically formulated in Marxism-Leninism.

The most profound expression of the class character of social ideas and theories is the partisanship of ideology. Bourgeois ideologists usually reject the party character of ideology and portray their views and theories as "general", "supra-class" or "universal". But such declarations manifest either illusion or hypocrisy.

More often than not the terms "non-partisanship" and "supra-class" are used to camouflage partisanship and affiliation with the party of the exploiters. That was why Lenin wrote that "the non-party idea is a bourgeois idea. The party idea is a socialist idea".²

In contrast to the false objectivism and hypocritical assertions of bourgeois ideologists about the supra-class ideology, Marxism frankly and openly recognises the class, party character of ideology and declares for all to hear that socialist ideology serves the interests of the proletariat and all working masses.

The Marxist party principle of ideology has always been attacked by overt and covert opponents of Marxism. These attacks are particularly vicious today when the socialist

¹ Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 60.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 79.

and bourgeois ideologies have clashed in bitter struggle. The main thesis advanced by the present-day opponents of Marxism is that partisanship is incompatible with science, that the truth and party spirit are conceptions that exclude one another. Bourgeois Right-wing reformist opponents of Marxism assert that recognition of the class character of social theories allegedly contradicts their scientific objectivity. If ideology is of a class character, they say, then the class factor leads to "one-sidedness" and subjectivism, to a distortion of the truth. In this respect the most typical arguments are advanced by Karl Mannheim, Max Scheler, Helmuth Plessner and other exponents of the bourgeois "sociology of knowledge". In *Ideology and Utopia* Mannheim asserts that science is objective because of its alleged non-party nature, and ideology, being of a class character, is always subjective and is either deliberate, or at best unconscious falsification of social relations. The content of science are laws, theories and hypotheses, while ideology is made up of doctrines, prophecies and myths justifying the selfish interests of a given class. Considering that all ideologies are socially conditioned, Mannheim declared, they reflect the social relations in the crooked mirror of class interest. Taking that bourgeois ideology is subjective, then Marxism, as the ideology of the proletariat, in equal measure expresses only the subjective interests and aims of the working class, he claims. In this way the Marxist doctrine about the social conditionality of cognition of social phenomena is directed against Marxism itself. According to this opinion, the objective truth in social sciences must be somewhere half-way between the classes or above classes. Mannheim seeks to find a social stratum which by virtue of its social position could lay claim to playing the role of an unbiased vehicle of truth and arrived at the conclusion that in a bourgeois society it was the intelligentsia.

In recent years theories about the "withering away of ideology" and the "deideologising" of social science and social life have come into vogue with the ideologists of modern capitalism. They claim that as a result of the scientific and technical revolution "technical-rational thinking", which will deideologise politics, philosophy and art and thus put "an end to ideology", is asserting itself in

the 20th century. They do not conceal the fact that talk about the "end of ideology" is spearheaded chiefly against Marxism-Leninism. It is perfectly clear that the theory of "deideologising" contemporary society is itself propaganda of a definite ideology, namely, the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Its purport is to sow doubt about the scientific veracity of Marxism-Leninism which the ideologists of anti-communism define only as "ideological utopia", "social mythology", "pseudo-religion", and so forth. Following the lead of bourgeois philosophers, the revisionists demand that Marxism be "deideologised" and social science "freed" from ideology, and reject the Marxist party principle as "obsolete".

Criticising Marxism on these issues, its opponents often refer to the negative use of such terms as "ideology" and "ideologisation" by the founders of Marxism. Marx and Engels did frequently use these terms in a negative sense to characterise "false consciousness." "Ideology," wrote Engels, "is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, it is true, but with false consciousness."¹ What did Marx and Engels have in view when they called ideology a "false consciousness"? They used this concept of ideology to criticise the bourgeois consciousness of their time, that limited class consciousness which indulges in deceit and self-deceit, which draws a false perspective of historical development and presents the narrow egoistic interests of the bourgeoisie as the interests of all people. It was for this reason that the founders of Marxism defined the ideology of the reactionary classes as false consciousness which distorts real social relations. The socialist ideology of the proletariat is a scientifically grounded ideology, an objective truth basically differing from the false bourgeois consciousness. With the emergence of the materialist understanding of history, Engels noted, "socialism became a science".

Lenin in his works frequently mentions the concept "scientific ideology", primarily in characterising the Marxist doctrine. Socialist ideology, he stresses, "presupposes a high level of scientific development, demands scientific work".²

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 459.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 163.

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* he writes about a "scientific ideology (as distinct, for instance, from religious ideology)" to which "there corresponds an objective truth, absolute nature".¹

It is clear, therefore, that the attempts of the bourgeois philosophers and revisionists to justify "deideologisation" of Marxism by quoting the founders of Marxism themselves, are absolutely groundless.

The contraposition of science and ideology, and ideology and reality is a bourgeois conception intended to hide the actual contraposition of scientific and unscientific ideology.

What is the actual correlation between ideology and science, social conditionality and objective truth in cognition of social phenomena?

The ideology of the reactionary classes is not scientific in its essence and is incapable, owing to the interests and positions of the theoreticians of these classes, of scientifically analysing social reality and the trends of its development. Such is the ideology of the modern imperialist bourgeoisie. In all its theories whether economic, political, moral, philosophical or aesthetic it seeks to express the interests of the bourgeoisie which is historically a doomed class, hostile to genuine social progress and to the objectively truthful cognisance of society and the laws of its development.

Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat, which correctly analyses social relations and the prospects of historical development, is the direct opposite of the anti-scientific and reactionary ideology of the modern bourgeoisie. The class character of the Marxist-Leninist teaching does not reject, but, on the contrary, presupposes scientific, objective cognition of reality.

First, the class interest of the proletariat coincides with the objective course of history and is in line with historical progress. The proletariat is vitally interested in obtaining the fullest and deepest understanding of the laws of the objective world and in thoroughly studying social processes. "The more ruthlessly and disinterestedly science proceeds," Engels wrote, "the more it finds itself in har-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 136.

mony with the interests and aspirations of the workers.”¹ The epochal events of our times—the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and communist construction in the U.S.S.R., the formation of the world socialist system, the steady spread of the revolutionary movement of the oppressed peoples—are irrefutable proof of the scientific truth of Marxism-Leninism. Here, as in other sciences, social practice is the only criterion of truth.

Second, in analysing the question of partisanship and scientific objectivity of Marxism-Leninism, it should be borne in mind that the aspirations, aims and tasks of the working class coincide in all vital issues with the interests of all working people. The proletariat cannot have any egoistic class sectarian aspirations that contradict the interests of the masses. Lenin had repeatedly pointed out that the Communists uphold party principles in the interests of the broad masses and their emancipation from all sorts of bourgeois illusions.

Marxism-Leninism, as the scientific ideology of the working people, is unity of class interests and science, of partisanship and truth.

The Marxist-Leninist teaching about the class character of ideology calls the Communists consistently to uphold the interests of the working people and vigorously unmask hostile reactionary ideology. Nevertheless, the principle of the communist partisanship of ideology is profoundly dialectical and has nothing in common with schematism, stereotypeness or one-sidedness. The class nature of ideology manifests itself in different ways in different ideological forms in accordance with their specific features. Political ideology, for example, has a particularly clear-cut class nature, for political theories express the immediate economic interests of social classes. Partisanship in philosophy is of a more involved nature because philosophy alongside the ideological aspect of world outlook of different classes and social groups also includes the aspect of scientific and philosophical cognition of reality. At the same time, the struggle between progressive and reactionary philosophical ideas, between materialism and idealism, in

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 402.

the final count reflects the position and the struggle of different classes. Partisanship in art and literature is still more specific and multifaceted and is discerned only as a result of a concrete-historical and artistic analysis of works of art and literature. And yet the subjective political views of a particular writer or artist do not necessarily coincide with the objective content of his work (as in the works of Balzac or Lev Tolstoi, for example).

The Marxist approach to an analysis of ideological phenomena is equally hostile both to dogmatism and sectarianism. It requires careful consideration of all that is valuable in philosophical, ethical, artistic and other works coupled with precise definition of their ideological direction.

Marxism recognises no compromise between opposing ideologies. Lenin wrote: "The only choice is—either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a 'third' ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or any above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology *in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree* means to strengthen bourgeois ideology."¹

The ideological struggle in the international arena is becoming more acute in present-day conditions. The greater the successes of socialism, the greater become the contradictions of world capitalism, and the more astute become the methods employed by ideologists of imperialism in the struggle against communism. Bourgeois propaganda is endeavouring to conceal the antagonism and the vices of modern state-monopoly capitalism, blunt the political consciousness of the working people and paralyse their will to fight for socialism. It seeks to inculcate the masses with individualism, to lead them away from politics, and from the solution of key social problems. Anti-communism has become the leitmotif of imperialist ideology.

Fully aware that direct anti-Soviet attacks coupled with crude anti-communist demagoguery cannot produce any results in the ideological struggle, many politicians and ideologists of the contemporary capitalist world are resort-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 384.

ing to more flexible forms of struggle against communism. In recent years the "doctrine of peaceful coexistence of two ideologies" and tactics of "building bridges" between capitalism and socialism have become current among the bourgeois and Right-wing socialist ideologists. Some bourgeois ideologists claim that in the contemporary epoch the development of capitalism and socialism is following the line of "convergence" (growing resemblance) which will result in their "synthesis", a fusion into a "single industrial society".

The aim of these ideas is to extend the principle of peaceful coexistence between capitalist and socialist states to the sphere of ideology and to interpret it as coexistence of capitalist and socialist ideologies. To achieve this the champions of "ideological coexistence" demand that Communists reject ideological struggle, and are intensifying the "export" of bourgeois ideology into socialist countries calculating that this will result in the ideological "erosion" of communism.

Recognising that the principle of peaceful coexistence is the foundation of the foreign policy of socialist countries, Marxism-Leninism at the same time regards it as a form of class struggle between capitalism and socialism in the international arena, as a class struggle embracing political, economic and ideological spheres. Therefore there can be no "synthesis" of bourgeois and socialist ideologies, for in practice this would have signified a betrayal of the interests of the working masses, their demobilisation in the struggle against imperialism. In all circumstances, the struggle against bourgeois ideology must be uncompromising, because it is a class struggle, a struggle for man, for his dignity and freedom, a struggle to invigorate the positions of socialism and communism, in the interests of the international working class.

3. Relative Independence of Ideology. The Role of Ideas in Social Development

All social ideas and views—social consciousness as a whole—originate and develop on the basis of economic conditions and in this sense they have no history that is

independent of the history of social development. Such is the basic conclusion of historical materialism concerning the origin and development of social consciousness. But the Marxist conception of society's spiritual life is not confined to this conclusion. We have already pointed out that ideology is ultimately determined by economic development, that there is a range of intermediary links between the economy and ideology. This means that social ideas and theories are to an extent independent of society's economic basis, that they have a certain amount of independence which, in Marxist terminology, is known as *relative independence of ideology*. Historical materialism in no way identifies the processes taking place in society's ideological development with those occurring in economic development. The sphere of the history of ideas has its specific laws, its inner logic. Speaking of this peculiarity of the ideological process, Engels wrote: "Every ideology ... once it has arisen, develops in connection with the given concept-material, and develops this material further; otherwise it would not be an ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities, developing independently and subject only to their own laws."¹

Thus *ideology develops not only on the basis of a general historical law* according to which social being gives rise to and determines social consciousness, but also *on the basis of a specific law* typical of ideological development itself, of its ability to develop in line with its own specific laws, by virtue of its inner logic.

This thesis of historical materialism is very important for correctly understanding the history of mankind's spiritual culture, the development and interaction of different ideological forms, and particularly for correctly understanding the role of ideas in social development. It guards us against vulgar sociology, schematism and simplification.

The relative independence of ideology is manifested first and foremost in the *continuity* of man's spiritual development. Each new ideological system, being in content a reflection of society's economic relations, in its form is a continuation of the preceding development of thought and

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 397.

depends on the accumulated store of knowledge, ideas and concepts. Social ideas and theories do not arise from scratch in every new epoch. They develop on the basis of the ideological material of the preceding epochs, under the impact of the preceding stages of ideological development, and are directly related to them. Thus there is an uninterrupted line of ideological development in all the spheres of social consciousness—in philosophy, art, morals, science, etc.

"The ideologist who deals with history," Engels wrote, "...thus possesses in every sphere of science material which has formed itself independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through its own independent process of development in the brains of these successive generations."¹

The successive development of ideology is not isolated from the economic development of society, and in the final count it is based on it. But the history of ideological development and the periods of its rise and decline do not fully coincide with those of economic development. This is evidenced by numerous facts from the history of mankind's spiritual culture, and therein the relative independence of ideology is manifested.

Ideological continuity is also linked with the class character of society. Various social classes draw diverse ideological material from the thought of previous generations. The progressive social classes turn to the progressive theories of the past and discard the reactionary ideas that have outlived themselves. Their ideology includes, in a reappraised form, the positive heritage of the past. Marxism-Leninism, being the world outlook of the most revolutionary social class, has absorbed all that was best and most progressive in the ideas, theories and scientific achievements of the past epochs. Communist morality includes ideas of humanism and aspirations to freedom, and moral standards common to all mankind, cultivated by the masses in the course of the centuries in their struggle against the social oppression and moral vices. Soviet literature rests on the progressive humanistic and realistic traditions of the Russian literature of the 19th century.

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 497-98.

Progressives in all countries deeply respect the cultural heritage of their own and other peoples. Being internationalists, they are patriots and best representatives of their nation.

The reactionary social classes, on the contrary, draw reactionary theories from the ideological heritage of the past adapting them to their own class interests. That is why the ideologists of the outgoing classes seek to revive all that is obsolete and anti-popular discarding or falsifying the progressive cultural heritage of the past. Thus, the political ideology of the present-day imperialist bourgeoisie makes use of the reactionary political ideas of the past—of racialism, Malthusianism, and the elite theory. The idealistic trends in contemporary bourgeois philosophy rest on the reactionary philosophical theories of the past. Neo-Thomism has its historical roots in the scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas, neo-positivism in Machism and 19th century positivism, existentialism in the irrational philosophy of the past.

The Marxist-Leninist teaching of cultural continuity is of basic significance for the construction of a new, socialist society. Lenin repeatedly pointed out that socialist culture does not rise on an empty place; it is the further development of the best specimens, traditions and results of past culture. It is not a nihilistic attitude to the cultural heritage, but the assimilation of all that is valuable and progressive, and creative reassessment of mankind's cultural achievements—such is a law-governed process of the cultural revolution during the transition from the old to the new society. This is illustrated by the experience of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R.

The relative independence of ideology also finds expression in the fact that social ideas and theories *can outpace the economic development of society*.

Progressive social theories, proceeding from the study of realities and disclosing the urgent needs of society, can scientifically foresee the basic trends in historical development. The world outlook of progressive classes and social groups always displayed historical optimism, a striving to foresee the results of their activity, to take a look into the future. Such traits were also typical of the ideas and theories of the bourgeois class in the period of its rise, of the

ideologists of revolutionary democracy and proponents of utopian socialism. But these instances when the ideas and theories of progressive pre-Marxist ideologists outpaced reality were very limited and frequently erroneous owing to their unscientific view of the historical process. The Marxist social theory was the first to base the prediction of historical development on a scientific footing. It could do so on the basis of scientific cognition of objective reality, of the laws and trends of social development. Having arrived at the basic conclusion that capitalism will inevitably fall and communism will be established, the Marxist doctrine more than a century ago scientifically determined the course of social development. The scientific prognosis has been proved by the concrete history of mankind.

Social consciousness, however, has a tendency to lag behind social being. The survivals of the past persist with especial tenacity in the sphere of social psychology, where customs and traditions, deep-rooted opinions, sentiments and conceptions play a big role. They possess a tremendous force of inertia. "The tradition of all the dead generations," Marx wrote, "weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living."¹ We know that some sections of the proletariat find it very difficult to rid themselves of bourgeois illusions and prejudices. Small-proprietor mentality and prejudices, with which a systematic struggle has to be waged, still endure under socialism.

The lag of social consciousness behind social being is not confined to the sphere of social psychology alone. It is also inherent in ideology, particularly in the ideas and theories of the outgoing social classes. Reactionary ideas (religious, for instance) are highly conservative and prevail long after the historical conditions engendering them have disappeared.

Thus, the history of society's spiritual development contains concrete facts demonstrating the relative independence of ideology, and its ability to develop in line with its specific laws which operate within the limits of the general dependence on society's economic relations. This gives rise to the question: what are the causes of the

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 247.

relative independence of ideology, and how this feature in the development of social consciousness can be explained?

First of all, it is necessary to deal with such a gnosiological cause as the nature of consciousness itself, its relative independence with regard to matter. For its content in general, consciousness is a reflection of being, of the material world. Social consciousness is a reflection of social being, of society's material life at a specific historical stage. In both instances this reflection is not a metaphysical, passive act. It has a complex dialectical character, and because of this, consciousness invariably acquires an *active character*.

The consciousness of men is primarily a product of society's historical development which rests on experience, the material and productive activity of people directed at promoting the productive forces, conquering nature and making it serve the interests of man. In his well-known theses about Feuerbach, Marx used this vigorous human activity, practical experience, to explain the activity of consciousness.

Consciousness is secondary in its content because it reflects material reality. But it does not simply copy reality, it strives to cognise, comprehend and penetrate into its essence, and in a sense ideally to transform it. As a result of this activity of consciousness, the ideological reflection of society's economic basis is to a degree independent of this basis. Idealists absolutise this independence of consciousness and go as far as to claim the pre-eminence of the spiritual over the material. Historical materialism, however, does not regard this independence as absolute, but as relative and restricted with certain limits, for in the final count, social consciousness always depends on social being.

Thus the specific features of consciousness itself, its dialectical nature and its activity are the principal cause of ideology's relative independence which will always exist. To this should be added the influence exerted by the division of labour into mental and physical at certain stages of social development. In the process of transition from primitive society to class society, at the low stage of economic development, the further development of so-

ciety's productive forces, the state and law and the creation of science and art were all possible, as Engels had said, only on the basis of division of labour between the mass engaged in manual labour and the few privileged managing production, trade and state affairs and occupying themselves with art and science.¹

The division of mental and physical labour isolated spiritual production from material production and imparted a semblance of the former's complete independence from society's material life. In the further course of historical development, differentiation spread to the sphere of mental labour. Each different ideological form gave rise to a definite group of ideologists who elaborated the ideological systems of the ruling class. Specialists in law, politics, philosophy, religion and arts appeared. The relative independence of ideology does not disappear with the transition from a class to a classless society. It remains a law of the ideological process. In communist society, the relative independence of ideology merely disembarrasses itself of the ugly forms engendered by the distinction between mental and physical labour and its limited class character. In communist society, the activity of ideas and consciousness and their influence on all the aspects of social life will substantially increase. The spiritual culture of communism will grow richer and more variegated both in form and content.

Historical materialism's thesis on the relative independence of ideology is very important in gaining a correct understanding of historical development, of the interaction between the various aspects of social life. The relative independence of ideology manifests itself primarily in the *active role of ideas and theories, in their converse influence on the economic basis of society*. Arising on the basis of social being, ideas influence social being because of their relative independence and are a most important force of historical development. The dialectical-materialistic understanding of the causes and motive factors of history is by no means limited to the recognition of only one cause—the economic factor. Explaining the essence of the materialistic understanding of history, Engels

¹ See Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 250.

wrote: "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these influence one another and also the economic basis. It is not that the economic situation is the only *cause*, solely *active*, while everything else has only passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always paves the way for itself."¹

Recognition of the active role of ideas and theories and of human sentiments, desires, aspirations and will, in short, of consciousness in general, is one of the cornerstones of Marxist social science. In the early period of his activity, when he was becoming a proletarian revolutionary, Marx wrote: "Material force must be overcome by material force, but theory too becomes a material force as soon as it grips the masses."²

Ideas are secondary because they arise on the basis of social being. But they are not at all secondary considering the role they play in historical development. Ideas arise precisely for the purpose of serving people's social requirements, their historical activity.

The opponents of Marxism usually depict Marxism in a deliberately coarsened and vulgarised form as "economic determinism" which allegedly negates the ideological motives of human activity. Such an idea of Marxism has nothing in common with the scientific revolutionary theory of Marxism. Actually, however, it is impossible to negate the active role played by ideological motives in historical development, particularly when speaking of ideas reflecting the urgent requirements of society and not of vague ideas or false theories that are divorced from reality. The history of the past century and particularly the contemporary epoch prove convincingly that Marxists-Leninists attach vast importance to the role played in history by the subjective factor—the activity of the masses, progressive classes, revolutionary parties and single individuals. The profound revolutionary transformation of the world on a new social basis takes place as a result of

¹ Marx and Engels, *Works*, Vol. 39, p. 175 (in Russian).

² Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. I, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1958, S. 385.

people's conscious activity, in which they are guided by the advanced revolutionary theory. "Without revolutionary theory," Lenin wrote, "there can be no revolutionary movement."¹

Let us analyse this question from the point of view of the theoretical propositions of historical materialism.

The development of human society, like the development of nature, is an objective law-governed process. But unlike nature, this process is not spontaneous or automatic. It is the result of the people's activity. "Everything which sets men in motion," Engels said, "must go through their minds."² People acting in history set themselves definite conscious aims and are guided by definite ideological motives. These conscious aims and ideological motives of human activity are historically conditioned, i.e., they have a definite material basis. But within the framework of this historical conditionality a great mobilising role is played by the ideological motives of historical activity.

Lenin repeatedly emphasised that consciousness plays an active, effective role in social life and pointed out that it participates in historical development. History is made by people endowed with consciousness which turns into an essential and important factor of social life.

By cognising the laws of social development, people can set themselves definite conscious aims on the basis of this knowledge and work for their realisation. Ideas, because they have appeared and exist in consciousness, express definite interests of people; they cannot remain within the framework of their ideal existence but strive for reality and for embodiment into practice.

But for ideas to turn into reality there should be material prerequisites which are created in the course of historical development. In order to be efficient any theory must correspond to these real conditions, otherwise it will be without foundation and inevitably pass out of the picture. The cause of success or failure of one or another idea lies not only in the idea itself, but, above all, in the prevalent social relations, in their contradictions and in the alignment of social forces and interests.

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 369.

² Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 393.

How powerful or effective social ideas are depends on the extent to which they are endorsed by the masses. To become embodied in reality ideas must grip the masses, inspire and arouse them to action. This is possible only if they will express definite social interests. Ideas mean nothing at all if people are not interested in them. "In order to carry out ideas men are needed who dispose of a certain practical force."¹ People will fight for the realization of ideas only if they see that these ideas embody their real interests and only provided they are easily understood by the masses.

In a class society, however, there are always two types of ideas—the ideas of the ruling and the oppressed classes expressing the diverse and opposing social interests of these classes. Some ideas are *progressive*, others *reactionary*, but all of them play an active role in social development, even if this activity does develop in opposite directions. Reactionary social ideas and theories express the interests of the moribund forces of society, of the social classes which are on their way out. They are active in the negative sense. Such, for instance, are the different ideological theories of modern imperialism, which are aimed at checking the onward march of history and hampering the objective historical necessity of society's transition from capitalism to socialism.

In modern capitalist countries the ruling class strives to subject the masses to its ideological influence. For this purpose it uses all modern means of information and mass media (the press, radio, television, etc.). Quite often the monopoly bourgeoisie manages to confuse the consciousness of the people with the result that part of the working people beguiled by bourgeois propaganda may act contrary to their fundamental objective interests.

Progressive ideas play a qualitatively different role in the life of society. Expressing the urgent needs of society, the interests of the progressive social classes, they help promote social progress and accelerate and facilitate historical development. Historical experience shows that the active and transforming role played by progressive ideas

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique*, p. 160.

was manifested most forcibly in the epoch of social revolutions when broad masses of people were drawn into historical activity. Thus, in their time, bourgeois political and philosophical theories played a progressive role in the fight against feudalism. At that stage the interests of the bourgeoisie temporarily coincided with those of the working masses. Nevertheless, the progressive significance of the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie was limited because of the egoistic class interests of the bourgeois class.

The impact of Marxist-Leninist ideology on historical development is fundamentally different in character. The Marxist-Leninist theory gives concentrated expression to and generalises material social processes, something not even the most progressive theory of the past could do. It grips the minds of broad masses of working people, for it corresponds to their basic social interests. Accordingly it became a mighty ideological weapon in the revolutionary remaking of society. The profound revolutionary transformation of society which had been and is being accomplished in the 20th century stems from the fact that broad masses of working people on all continents are being drawn into vigorous historical activity. Their struggle for a new, genuinely just life is illumined by the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, which penetrate deep into the consciousness of millions of people and constitute a great social force in the present-day epoch.

4. Forms and Specific Features of Social Consciousness

The main forms of social consciousness—*political ideology, juridical ideology, morality, religion, art, philosophy*—arose in the process of historical development on the basis of definite social requirements. There were no developed forms of social consciousness in primitive society, and rudiments of ideology in the shape of primitive art, morality and early forms of religion existed as undifferentiated, primitive consciousness, which corresponded to the still undeveloped social being with an extremely low level of the productive forces. Marx and Engels pointed

out that in primitive society consciousness was at first woven into material activity. It was only after the appearance and development of class society that social spiritual life began differentiating into specific forms.

Each form of social consciousness is called to life by definite social requirements. Political and juridical ideology, for example, arose as a result of the appearance of private property, classes and the state. The primitive undifferentiated forms of morality, art and religion developed into specific ideological forms when the level of social development reached a higher stage. In the process of historical development of society and its spiritual life a definite *correlation of forms of social consciousness* took shape in each socio-economic formation. Some of them dominated others and flourished, while some were in a state of decline and stagnation. Thus, in the feudal epoch religion was the dominating form of ideology which subjugated all other forms of ideology—philosophy, politics and jurisprudence. Under capitalism political and juridical ideology comes to the forefront. Upon coming to power the bourgeoisie brings into play political and juridical ideas and strives to fix its economic and political domination in juridical forms thus giving it a semblance of “legality”.

Subsequently in the process of society's transition to communism, a radical change takes place not only in the content but also in the structure of social consciousness. Religion, as a perverted reflection of reality, will finally disappear. At the same time society's requirements will engender a more powerful upsurge in science. Political and juridical consciousness will wither away and morality, which will become the principal regulator of human relations, will increase its sphere of operation. The conditions of life in communist society will be conducive to the blossoming of art and scientific philosophy.

Social consciousness has different forms depending on the *subject and the method of reflecting social being*. Each form reflects a definite aspect of social being in its own way, in a “language” that is peculiar to it. Political ideology reflects the relations between classes, morality reflects both the relations between people and man's attitude to the collective or society. There are also different methods

for reflecting reality. Philosophy and science reflect the object in the form of logical concepts, laws and theories, while in art this reflection takes the form of artistic images, and in morality and law—rules and norms governing the behaviour of people.

It is also possible to ascertain the difference in the forms of social consciousness by the *functions* they perform in social life, by the *social* role they play. Political ideas, for instance, formulate the social tasks of the classes and define the activity of political organisations and institutions while morality moulds the moral qualities of men and with the help of specific moral principles regulates human relations, and so forth.

Ideological forms also differ from one another by the *character of their connection with the economic basis of society*. Political and juridical ideologies stand closer to the economic basis than any other ideological form. They reflect the relations of production more or less directly and are shaped under the immediate influence of economy. For this reason Engels calls them ideologies of the "first order". Philosophy and art reflect the economic basis indirectly through a series of intermediate links and primarily through the prism of political ideology, in "political attire". These ideological spheres stand further away from the economic basis, and to quote Engels, "soar still higher in the air". As regards religion, it "stands furthest away from material life and seems to be most alien to it".¹

Thus, the forms of social consciousness differ from each other according to the subject and method of reflecting social being, to the social functions and the character of their interconnections with the economic basis of society. But this difference is relative inasmuch as not a single form of social consciousness is isolated and all of them are in close *interconnection and interaction*. The consciousness of each epoch is an integral system of views of one or another social class. Each form of social consciousness to a certain degree influences all other forms and in its turn is subjected to their influence. Art influences morality and is itself influenced by politics, philosophy and morality. Religious ideology, which influenced and

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 397.

still influences some philosophical trends, is at the same time influenced by certain philosophical ideas. The *decisive role* in this interaction is played by *political ideology* as one that is most closely connected with the economy of society.

Let us now study the basic forms of social consciousness in greater detail.

Political Ideology

Lenin defined politics as a concentrated expression of economics, as its epitome and culmination. The politics of a particular social class directly express its main and decisive class interests.

The political sphere has its own specific object of reflection in social life, namely, the interrelations of social classes. Politics reflect economy through the prism of class relations which take the form of class struggle in antagonistic class formations and of co-operation of working classes under socialism.

Politics embrace the *aims* and *tasks* advanced by the social classes in the struggle for their interests, and also *methods* and *means* of expressing and defending these interests.

The relation of classes to the state and its tasks and forms of activity are one of the cornerstones of politics. It also covers the relations between nations and states. Relations between states is the sphere of foreign policy which is unseparably bound up with the internal policy of the ruling class and is, in effect, its continuation. It follows, therefore, that in the broad sense of the word, politics are relations between classes, nations and states, the struggle of classes for domination in society, for state power and for directing its activity.

In this definition politics are viewed as political relations and actions. But in politics an important role is also played by *political ideology*, i.e., definite *political theories* and *views*, which are the ideological basis of the interests, aspirations and aims of a given social class. Political ideology is a *system of ideas* of a definite social class, which express its attitude to other classes, its views of the class

struggle and revolution, social and state structure, relations between nations and states and problems of war and peace. Political ideology finds its expression in the constitutions of countries, in the programmes and slogans of political parties and other political organisations.

In contemporary historical conditions *two political ideologies* directly confront each other—the Marxist-Leninist ideology, which expresses the interests of the working class and all working people, and the ideology of the imperialist bourgeoisie which expresses the interests of the exploiters.

The political ideology of the contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie is reactionary and anti-scientific. Its task is to justify and substantiate the need to preserve capitalist relations, and to achieve this ideologists of modern capitalism are advancing diverse political and economic theories: “people’s capitalism”, “welfare society”, “established society”, and so forth.

They are doing their utmost to justify the foreign policy of the imperialist states, which is determined by the class interests of monopoly capital and expresses its aggressive nature. The modern imperialist bourgeoisie propagandises the cold war policy and the arms race, the “positions of strength” policy in international relations, the idea of “neo-colonialism” aimed at enslaving the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and at suppressing the national liberation movement of the colonial and dependent countries.

The political ideology of Marxism-Leninism is scientific and consistently revolutionary. Its principles were set forth by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In contemporary conditions, the chief task of the Marxist-Leninist political ideology in the capitalist countries is to organise and rally the working class for the struggle against the exploiting system and to unite round the proletariat broad sections of the working people of town and country—the peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the progressive intelligentsia, all those oppressed by monopoly capital. Under capitalism and in transitional society there also exists a petty-bourgeois political ideology which reflects the interests and views of the petty bour-

geoisie, peasantry and artisans. It reflects the ambivalent position of these social groups. On the one hand, they oppose exploitation and support revolutionary action and democracy and, on the other, champion private property, exhibit uncertainty and are inclined to make concessions to reaction. The petty-bourgeois, anti-feudal and anti-capitalist theories, which arise in modern conditions in the countries that had broken the chains of colonialism, play a relatively progressive part. Therefore, it is the task of the revolutionary forces to use the progressive democratic content of these theories in the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism.

The scientific principles of the political ideology of Marxism-Leninism in the contemporary epoch have been creatively developed and elaborated in such important documents of the world communist movement as the Declaration and Statement of the Moscow 1957 and 1960 Meetings, the Programme of the C.P.S.U. and the programmes of other fraternal parties.

One of the fundamental principles of Marxist-Leninist political ideology is *proletarian internationalism*, recognition of the equality of all nations and nationalities, and national sovereignty and independence of all peoples. The Soviet Union and other socialist states steadfastly adhere to this principle in their policy; they support the just struggle of the peoples for freedom and independence and furnish them all-round assistance.

Juridical Ideology

Juridical ideology, or consciousness of law, is closely related to politics. This relationship is determined firstly by the fact that the dominating relations of production are directly reflected in legal norms; and that no other forms of ideology are as closely connected with society's economic basis as political and juridical ideologies. Secondly, law is forged under the decisive influence of the policy of the ruling class. The basic interests of the class in power are fixed into a definite system of juridical principles and laws and their obligatory character is sanctioned by the state. In the *Manifesto of the Communist*

Party Marx and Engels define jurisprudence as the will of the ruling class elevated to law.

But law as such should not be identified with juridical ideology. *Law is a system of mandatory rules of human behaviour in society* which are fixed in definite laws and backed by state compulsion. On the other hand, *juridical ideology is the sum total of views* expressing the attitude of a given class to the existing law, to legislation, it is the *conceptions* of what is legal and illegal, mandatory and optional. Like other forms of social consciousness juridical ideology has a specific character. Consciousness of the law reflects society's economic relations in specific juridical notions, in conceptions about the duties of the members of society, about the law and legality. It reflects not only economic, but also political and family relations. Yet juridical ideology reflects social relations from the standpoint of juridical regulation of the behaviour and actions of members of society. Engels wrote that "economic facts must assume the form of juristic motives in order to receive legal sanction".¹ Juristic motives and juridical norms is the specific "language" which is used to express economic and other social relations in the ideological form of legal consciousness. Hence, juridical ideology has a *normative character* regulating the behaviour of people in society. Its basic categories are rights and duties, law and legality, court and justice, crime and punishment, etc.

Like political theories, juridical theories have a patent class character. In an antagonistic society the juridical ideas of the ruling class serve to substantiate the legality of given social relations based on a definite type of property. The ruling class not only consolidates the relations of production in which it is vitally interested through juridical laws, but also puts forward specific juridical ideology to present its law as the only just one. Thus, bourgeois juridical ideology interprets bourgeois law as personification of supreme justice, bourgeois democracy as the ideal democratic organisation and bourgeois court as unbiased. In actual fact, however, bourgeois law defends the interests of capitalist property; bourgeois democracy provides only formal but not genuine equality before the

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 397.

law and is only a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Socialist law expresses the state will of the working people under the leadership of the working class in society and the state. In his work *The State and Revolution* Lenin profoundly substantiated the necessity of law and the role it plays in socialist society. During the first phase of communism society cannot do without law which is necessary "in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) in the distribution of products and the allotment of labour among the members of society".¹ Legal rules are needed, Lenin pointed out, to teach people to work for society *without any rules of law*, i.e., to work the communist way, giving their abilities to the full. Under socialism the law expresses the interests of all people, strengthens and safeguards social property as the economic basis of the new society. The transition of society to communism will signify an all-round extension of citizens' rights, of the freedom of the individual. In the process of this transition juridical standards will gradually turn into moral standards, thus leading to the establishment of the principles of communist society.

Morality

The distinguishing feature of morality as a form of ideology is that it reflects those aspects of social being which are connected with the relation of people to one another, the relation of the individual to his class and to other classes, to the collective and to society as a whole.

Morality as a form of social consciousness is the aggregate of historically established and historically changing rules and standards of human behaviour, which are common for a given class or for society as a whole.

The behaviour of men from the viewpoint of morality is judged by the moral categories of good and evil, justice and injustice, honour and dishonour, conscience, duty, etc.

Morality has many aspects in common with law, because legal relations are also connected with the behaviour of

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 467.

people in society. But unlike legal standards, which are expressed in the form of laws and which are backed by the compulsory sanction of the state, *morality rests on the force of public opinion, man's inner convictions, habits and upbringing*. Law is the will of the ruling class elevated to statute, while morality is the will of a class which has become its public opinion.

While the oppressed classes do not have their own law because they do not possess state power, they always had and do have their revolutionary morality.

Before Marxism there was no scientific theory of the origin and essence of morality. The pre-Marxist ethical theories were under the sway of religious and idealistic moral theories. Today, too, idealism characterises bourgeois philosophy of morality.

It was only Marxism that revealed the true sources of morality, its class and historical character, its place and role in social development. The founders of Marxism exposed the untenability of the views which attributed morality to divine injunctions, the absolute idea, the "eternal nature" of man, and the like. They proved scientifically that the *source of moral ideas lies in human society* whose foundation are economic relations. "All moral theories," wrote Engels, "have been hitherto the product, in the last analysis, of the economic conditions of society obtaining at the time."¹

Though Marxism says that the economic relations of society are the ultimate source of moral views, this does not mean that it denies the influence exerted by other factors of social life on their formation and development. Economic relations act on the moral consciousness of men both directly and indirectly through political and legal relations, philosophy, religion and art. Moral traditions and customs are so powerful that some moral views persist long after the disappearance of the economic conditions which had engendered them. At the same time morality is a historical phenomenon. It took shape and developed simultaneously with the appearance and development of human society. The principles of morality, the standards and rules of men's behaviour, as well as the content of

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 131.

the moral conceptions of good and evil, justice and injustice, etc., are neither eternal nor immutable, established for all times. They have constantly varied and are varying under the influence of changes in production and above all in production relations. "The conceptions of good and evil," wrote Engels, "have varied so much from nation to nation and from age to age that they have often been in direct contradiction to each other."¹

Moral progress in the history of society consisted in the perfection of men as moral beings, the development in them of the sense of civic and personal dignity and the desire to serve the interests of society. The actual bearers of moral progress and the supreme moral values of mankind have always been the working people. The most important factor of moral progress was the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed working people, in which men acquired such qualities as hatred of exploitation, courage, loyalty to social duty, solidarity, etc.

Marxism, while recognising the existence of universal elements of morality, focusses attention on the *class content of morality*, for in a society divided into antagonistic classes there cannot be one morality both for the ruling and the exploited classes. In a slave-owning society, the dominant morality is that of the slave-owners, in feudal society—that of the feudals, and in bourgeois society—that of the capitalists. They are opposed by the moral standards and principles of the slaves, peasants and proletarians.

Bourgeois morality sanctifies private property and exploitation, and yet extreme individualism is one of its fundamental principles. "Man is to man a wolf"—this is the essence of capitalist practice and of the morality reflecting this practice. The morality of the exploiters is opposed by the wholesome, life-asserting morality of the working class which is the embryo of a new, *communist morality*. "Our morality," Lenin wrote, "stems from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat."²

The working class is the bearer of the lofty moral principles of the heroic struggle against violence and oppres-

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 130.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 291.

sion, the principles of the fraternity of all peoples and lofty humane ideals. By fulfilling its historic mission the proletariat is destined to effect a moral revival of mankind, assert new social principles that are based on the co-operation and mutual support of people and give men the fruits of their labour, the happiness of creation and every opportunity to develop their talents. In this struggle the working class and its Marxist parties are followed by all the exploited masses, and the principles of proletarian morality in ever greater measure become the morality of all working people.

The present-day revolutionary and national liberation struggle of the working people contains many examples of devotion to a high moral duty. These include the life and work of Maurice Thorez, Palmiro Togliatti, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Julian Grimau, Nicos Beloyannis, Patrice Lumumba, and many others. All nations have their heroes whose life is the embodiment of the lofty moral principles of selfless service to humanity.

With the victory of socialism communist morality acquires all the necessary conditions to develop to the full. Characterising the essence and the tasks of the new morality Lenin said that it is based on the *struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism*. The ethical principles and standards of this new, genuinely humane morality are set down in the Programme of the C.P.S.U.

The most important principles and features of communist morality are devotion to the communist cause, love for the socialist motherland, conscientious labour for the good of society, a high sense of public duty, revolutionary humanism and socialist internationalism. Communist morality presupposes consistent implementation of the principles of collectivism, comradely mutual assistance, friendship and fraternity of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., uncompromising attitude to all who violate public interests, and to the enemies of communism, peace and freedom of nations.

Being an element of the superstructure, communist morality is exerting and will continue to exert beneficial influence in ever growing measure on all aspects of life of the new society, on economy, politics and culture. There-

fore every step towards communism signifies a further expansion of the sphere of operation of the moral factor and the enhancement of the role played by the principles of communist morality in the life of society. The morality of the builder of communism is a new stage in man's moral progress.

Religion

Like the other forms of social consciousness, religion is a reflection of social being. But the specific feature of this ideological form is that it reflects reality in an unreal, illusory light in which, to quote Engels, "the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces".¹

Religion is a *definite set of ideas and conceptions that distort reality, i.e., a system of supernatural conceptions and myths*. It also includes specific sentiments and actions of man and religious rites which constitute religious worship. These actions and rites express man's attitude to the supernatural world, to God, and the believer's illusory idea that he influences the other world. "*Religion*," Plekhanov wrote, "can be defined as a *more or less harmonious system of conceptions, sentiments and actions*. Conceptions form the mythological element of religion; sentiments constitute the field of *religious feelings* and actions relate to the field of *religious worship* or, in other words, *cult*."²

Being a specific form of social consciousness, religion performs a special social function. Lenin called Marx's famous utterance that "religion is opium for the people" the cornerstone of Marxism's world outlook on the question of religion. Claiming to be the sole authority in world outlook and morality, religion misguides the believers and misinterprets their vital interests and needs. By preaching divine predestination it fetters man's activity subjugating it to illusory ideals and aims.

Despite the idealists' assertions that religion is eternal,

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 435.

² G. V. Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. III, p. 330 (in Russian).

Marxism-Leninism has shown that religion is an *historical phenomenon*. It originated at a definite stage of human development and will inevitably disappear in the future. Initially, fetishism of religion developed in the consciousness of the primitive man as a reflection of his helplessness in the struggle against the elements. But with the division of society into classes, it were the relations of exploitation and social oppression that became the main source nurturing religion. Lenin noted that in a bourgeois society religion's principal roots are social. Under conditions of private property, fear of the blind force of capital makes the masses religious.

As an ideological form, religion possesses a *considerable degree of relative independence*. It is this that explains its *exceptional conservatism* owing to which religious beliefs and myths continue to live long after the disappearance of the social conditions that engendered them. Yet religion is also subject to changes taking place in history. What are called world religions—Christianity, Buddhism and Islam—are the product of specific historical conditions, and change in line with the development of social relations.

Religion is essentially anti-scientific. It appeals to divine revelation and gives a distorted picture of natural and social life. That is why a decisive battle is being waged between science and religion for many centuries already. Great scientists and materialist philosophers had criticised religious prejudices. In the course of many centuries the Church mercilessly throttled science and persecuted scientists, prohibited the dissemination of progressive ideas, destroyed books by progressive thinkers many of whom had died in jail or at the stake.

Today the Church is compelled to take the new historical conditions into account, finding it ever more difficult to wage an open struggle against science in view of the scientific and technical revolution and the growth of education and culture. That is why it propagandises the idea of "harmony" between belief and intellect, religion and science. The purpose of the efforts to reconcile religion with science is to win more room for religious belief at the expense of scientific knowledge and to subject the achievements of modern science to religion.

But whatever the extent to which religion modernises itself, it remains hostile to scientific progress and is directed against the scientific world outlook as a whole.

Today the lot of religion in the capitalist countries is difficult and contradictory, in view of the general decline of religiosity, especially among the working class. This process flows from the growing influence of socialism, the crisis of the world capitalist system, the intensification of the class struggle and scientific and technical progress. In most capitalist countries religious organisations are formally separated from the state, and their constitutions proclaim freedom of conscience. In actual fact, however, the Church is becoming part of the machinery of state, and the rising generation is still subjected to religious influence. An ever increasing role in the political and ideological activity of imperialism is now being played by *clericalism*, which has its own political parties standing in power in some capitalist countries.

The reactionary clericals are striving to split the working-class movement, to destroy the unity of the believers and the unbelievers in the class struggle. Yet some clergymen frequently criticise bourgeois society and talk about the difficult condition of the working people. This is particularly characteristic of the Left wing of Catholicism. In view of the fact that some ministers refuse to support anti-communism and side with the forces of democracy and peace, it is not improbable that an agreement may be reached with this section of clergy for waging a joint political struggle. The Marxist parties welcome these changes in the policy of the Church; they enter into political dialogue with progressive clergymen and support their condemnation of the imperialism's aggressive policy and approval of the policy of peaceful coexistence of capitalist and socialist states.

The Marxist dialectical-materialist world outlook organically includes atheism. The Marxist parties' historical task of liberating the working people from all forms of subjugation also envisages their emancipation from religious oppression. To overcome religion it is necessary to eradicate those social relations of exploitation which breed belief in supernatural forces. For this reason the fight

against religion should necessarily be studied in concrete connection with the class struggle of the working people. In the matter of surmounting religion Marxism-Leninism is opposed both to the Right-wing opportunist trend of reconciling religious and socialist ideologies and to the Left-wing sectarian tendency of foisting a "political war against religion" on the proletariat. Right-wing opportunism in religious matters signifies relinquishment of Marxism's ideological positions, while Left-wing sectarian anarchism leads to opposition between the believers and the unbelievers, pushes the problem of religion to the forefront and transfers the ideological struggle against religion to the sphere of political struggle. The Marxist-Leninist parties in the capitalist countries are guided by Lenin's thesis about the unity of action of the working people, both atheists and believers, in the struggle against imperialism. "Unity in this really revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth," Lenin wrote, "is more important to us than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven."¹ Marxists-Leninists proceed from the fact that philosophical and religious differences are not an obstacle to the working people's joint struggle for their common interests.

The fight against religion is not an end in itself, but should be subordinated to the principal task—the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism. The interests of political struggle must be given priority, for in the final count the emancipation of the working people from religious prejudices depends on how successful the struggle against imperialism is.

Today tens of millions of people in the colonial and dependent countries are rising against imperialism and colonialism. In the main they are peasants. That is why Marxists-Leninists should take into account the dialectical complexity and the contradictory nature of the situation. For various reasons—insufficiently high level of class consciousness, ignorance of scientific theory, the power of traditions of a given country and religious upbringing—democratic and national liberation movements may assume also a religious form. Lenin wrote: "Political pro-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 87.

tests in religious guise are common to all nations at a certain stage of their development. . . ."¹

Many revolutionary-democratic leaders in the former colonies in Asia and Africa, for instance, refer to the ideology of Islam. Here, of course, it should be borne in mind that the national liberation struggle as such arises from social conditions and not religion. It is necessary to distinguish between the progressive content of the national democratic movements and their religious form. On the whole these movements have a progressive, anti-imperialist character.

A radical break-through in the solution of the religious question comes with the victory of socialist revolution and achievement of genuine freedom of conscience. The Great October Socialist Revolution created conditions for emancipating the working people from religious beliefs and traditions on a mass scale. Lenin's Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and the School from the Church promulgated on January 23, 1918, prohibited any restriction of the freedom of conscience, established equality of all religions and proclaimed the right of citizens not to profess any religion and to be atheists. Freedom to observe religious rites was guaranteed, provided they did not violate public law and order and did not impair the rights and the health of citizens. The school became genuinely secular and free of any influence on the part of the Church.

The victory of socialism dealt a decisive blow at religion's social roots and undermined them.

With the establishment of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the destruction of the class basis of religion, atheistic work in the country assumed the form of scientific critique of religious ideology, propaganda of scientific knowledge and moral education. The principal content of atheistic propaganda became materialist explanation of natural and social phenomena for the purpose of cultivating a progressive world outlook. During the years of Soviet power an overwhelming majority of people in the U.S.S.R. cast religion aside and became firm in their scientific world outlook. But a part of Soviet citizens still harbour religious preju-

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 243.

dices as survivals of the past in their consciousness. They, undoubtedly, play a negative role in the building of communism. That is why a great deal of attention is devoted to scientific atheistic education of the working people, which is viewed as a component of communist education.

The surmounting of religion is a difficult and protracted process which is connected with the further development and improvement of socialist social relations, elevation of the general educational and cultural level of the whole population, all-round spiritual development of the individual and betterment of educational work. In communist society, Marx wrote in *Capital*, the religious reflection of the real world will disappear completely and the practical relations of everyday life will "offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to Nature".¹

The road to the communist future is one of complete emancipation of man from religious beliefs and conceptions, of the triumph of reason and science.

Art

Art differs from other forms of social consciousness in both its object and in the way it reflects reality. It is the specific feature of art that it deals mainly with the social man, his destiny, character and attitude to the surrounding life, his spiritual world, his activities, thoughts and sentiments. The peculiarity of art consists in that it *reflects reality in the form of artistic images* and not in the scientific-logical form. Science and philosophy reflect natural and social phenomena in logical categories and abstract notions, but art reflects them in the form of artistic images. Literary, stage, musical and other artistic images disclose the essence of reality, the content of social relations and the truth of life through the individual in a concrete sensual form.

Images created by art are individual and concrete. But they reflect the common features of a whole group of phe-

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 79.

nomena and artistically generalise reality, disclosing the general through the particular, through living images. For instance, the character of Pavel Vlasov in Gorky's *Mother* reflects the typical features of the Russian revolutionary proletariat. Through artistic images art cognises reality, the nature of social contradictions. It also appraises phenomena occurring in life, regarding them either as beautiful or ugly, lofty or base, tragic or comic. The *social function of art*, its influence on social life, is first and foremost manifested in its educational significance. Chernyshevsky wrote that art is a "textbook of life". Its ideological-educational force lies in the great emotional influence it exerts on men's consciousness.

Idealist theories of art seek to tear it away from the social foundation on which it arises. They view works of art either as a manifestation of the eternal, absolute notion of beauty, or as an expression of the subjective human ego independent of social conditions. Art, they say, exists only for art's sake. Despite these assertions, however, the history of art shows that its development is inseparably bound up with social life, that it is a reflection of social conditions and the life of society. Like any other form of social consciousness, art develops in close connection with social progress and reflects the changes taking place in social being. But compared with other forms of ideology, politics and law, for instance, art is more removed from the economic basis, and such factors as artistic traditions and the state of the political and spiritual life of society play a special role in its development. Art reflects changes in society's economy very indirectly. The history of art knows many instances when it made rapid headway in countries with a relatively backward economy and died away in industrially advanced states. This proves that in a class society art does not directly reflect the level of production, but the sum total of social conditions, the course of the class struggle, and so forth. Continuity plays a big role in the development of art. Great classical works of world art do not die with the disappearance of the social conditions in which they were created, but continue to live a new life expressing social human sentiments and moods.

Genuine art is always popular in character. Literary, musical and artistic masterpieces have always expressed

the thoughts and aspirations of the people. Here is what Gorky wrote about people as the creator of art: "The people are not only the force which creates all material values, they are the sole and inexhaustible source of spiritual wealth; the first philosopher and poet in time, beauty and creative genius, who have created all the great poems, all the tragedies, including the greatest of them—the history of world culture."¹

In its development professional art was always closely bound up with folk art. Pushkin, Gogol, Stendhal, Hugo, Dickens, Tolstoi and many other brilliant writers reflected in their works, sometimes unwittingly, the sentiments, moods and hopes of the lowest social strata. Great artists of the past sought their characters in the storehouse of folk art, and were inspired by the thoughts and ideas prevalent among the people, and by their faith in the victory of good over evil.

Being a form of ideology, art in a class society is of a class character, although it does have certain features common to all men. Whether they know it or not writers and artists always express the interests of definite social classes, their outlook, views and the attitude to the surrounding world. The writer, as Gorky aptly put it, is the eyes, ears and voice of his class. In a class society art cannot stand in isolation from politics, from the system of class relations.

Some people endeavour to prove that ideology is alien to free art and that it impedes its development. Yet it is common knowledge that at all times there can be no genuine artistic creativity without ideas, and art degenerates if it lacks profound ideological content. In modern capitalist countries genuine art is often replaced with pseudo-art, with the products of the "mass culture", which are primitive in form and anti-humanistic in content. The leit-motif of this "mass" production, as well as of many modernistic-decadent works, is *dehumanisation of man*. Such "art" seeks to prove the invariability of man's nature and the impossibility substantially to alter human relations, and tries to show that human nature in general is dominated by primitive instincts and base feelings, egoism and

¹ M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 26 (in Russian).

brutality. It justifies and lauds people who trample upon moral principles and outrage human dignity. The main evil of the anti-realistic, decadent bourgeois art is its refusal truthfully to reflect reality; it destroys the artistic form, leads people away from life, draws their attention away from burning problems of the day and strives to infuse them with pessimism and despair.

It would be wrong and one-sided, nevertheless, to see nothing but signs of degeneration and disintegration in the art of modern bourgeois society. The deep-going contradictions of imperialism are also caused by the growth of the progressive, above all the revolutionary forces, that are fighting against imperialism, for everything that is new and progressive. Truthful art should reflect these contradictions and show the life-asserting tendencies. The greater the extent to which imperialism exposes itself as an anti-popular system, the more emphatically real artists sever their ties with it. Theodor Dreiser, George Bernard Shaw, Romain Rolland, Lion Feuchtwanger, Thomas Mann, Ernest Hemingway and many other talented Western writers vigorously condemned the anti-humanism of the capitalist system. At present a considerable number of writers, producers and actors oppose the decadent trends in literature and art.

Modern capitalism is hostile to true art. It fetters the creative activity and restricts the freedom of gifted writers and artists. This cannot but evoke protest on the part of creative workers and fosters their determination to uphold their freedom. But the protest of some modernists assumes the character of a one-man rebellion. Contemporary modernism is heterogeneous. In addition to artists who reject realism and ideas of social progress, modernistic trends have their adherents among artists who uphold progressive social ideas. Some of them strive for socialist ideas. In the works of "Left" modernists there are contradictions between aesthetic principles and the social problems which are posed by the contemporary liberation revolutionary movement.

With the victory of socialist revolution art is freed of the selfish interests of the exploiting classes and acquires ample opportunity for development. In these new conditions the popular essence of art manifests itself with

particular force. It asserts the ideas of revolutionary humanism and gives extensive development to the creative method known as *socialist realism*, which cannot be restricted to the limits of some sort of "ultimate" formal definition. Its content is a true, realistic and historically concrete portrayal of reality in its revolutionary development. "The purpose of socialist realism," Maxim Gorky wrote, "is to combat the survivals of the 'old world' with its pernicious influence, to eradicate these influences. But its principal task is to foster the socialist, revolutionary world outlook."¹ The art of socialist realism accepts neither passivity nor a contemplatory attitude to reality, nor a departure from it; it summons people to an active struggle for the social remaking of the world. It is this type of art, which is distinguished by its profound national character, communist party spirit, revolutionary humanism, high sense of civic duty, truthfulness, deep understanding of reality and uncompromising attitude to bourgeois ideology and morality, that has been formed in the U.S.S.R. since the establishment of Soviet rule.

The method of socialist realism cannot give standard recipes for creative work. It is opposed in principle to routine and levelling in art, and gives wide scope to the personal initiative of the artist, his thoughts and imagination, individual abilities and inclinations in choosing artistic forms and means. For all the unity of its ideological conceptions, the art of socialist realism develops in a great variety of individual peculiarities and styles of the artists.

Contributing his share in the building of the new, socialist society the artist attains genuine creative freedom because his works and his thoughts do not serve the "upper ten thousand" as bourgeois art does, but the "millions and tens of millions of working people—the flower of the country, its strength and its future".²

True art serves the aspirations and interests of broad masses, of all progressive mankind in its fight for the lofty ideals of socialism and communism.

¹ M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 382.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 48-49.

5. Science and Its Place in the Life of Society

Science is an important component of man's spiritual culture. It is an orderly arrangement of man's increasing knowledge of the surrounding world checked and verified by practice. Scientific knowledge expresses in precise concepts and laws the objective processes of natural and social development.

Modern science is an extremely ramified system of separate branches of knowledge, whose number increases as science progresses. On the whole, however, all sciences may be divided into two groups—*natural sciences* (astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.), and *social sciences* (history, political economy, jurisprudence, etc.). What is common between these two big groups of sciences is that they study the same material world, the only distinction is that they study different aspects of this world—nature or society.

Science dates back to a very remote period in human history, to the slave-owning system when mental labour separated from physical labour and special group of people, scientists, made its appearance. In this period the existing rudiments of scientific knowledge began to shape into systems of knowledge under the impact of social practice. In the opinion of Engels, however, the beginning of *modern natural science* as opposed to the natural philosophical speculations of the ancients, is connected with the emergence of capitalism. The rapid advance of natural sciences in Europe in the 16th-18th centuries was above all fostered by the requirements of capitalist production. The requirements of social practice, of material production are the mainspring and the chief motive force of the development of science. "From the very beginning," Engels wrote, "the origin and development of sciences has been determined by production."¹ But the ties between science and production are mutual in character. On the one hand, science is influenced by production and the needs of society, and on the other, the level of the productive forces largely depends on the state and level of scientific knowledge.

¹ Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 184.

Being a complex and many-sided social phenomenon, science is also connected with a multitude of other phenomena. Apart from the needs of material production, the direction and rates of scientific progress and application of scientific achievements are also influenced by such social factors as economic relations, social and political practice and the class struggle, the nature of the dominant world outlook and the level of spiritual culture as a whole, and also by the inner logic of scientific knowledge itself.

Although the needs of social production are the principal source of scientific progress, it should not be identified with production processes. Scientific development characterises the progressive and dialectically contradictory process of cognition. It is a process of constant change, verification, expansion and deepening of the scientific picture of the world, its experimental and theoretical substantiation, criticism and unceasing verification of conclusions. Science is the product of the spiritual life of society, the result of the mental, creative activity of many generations. Marx describes science as the "general spiritual product of social development", a product of "general historical development in its abstract form".¹ The relative independence of science as a special sphere of spiritual life is manifested in that the development of knowledge of the world does not and cannot automatically follow in the wake of production. Science has its own specific laws which differ from the laws of development of material production and social relations, and its own internal contradictions and problems. The tasks which social practice sets science can be solved only when knowledge has attained a definite level of development. Scientific discoveries can be made only on a definite scientific and theoretical basis. Of great importance for science, therefore, is *continuity* in the accumulation of scientific material, in which one scientific discovery leads to another and synthesises theoretical and experimental material accumulated in the course of past progress. As a result of this inner logic of development science raises new problems and makes new discoveries which greatly surpass the existing

¹ *Marx-Engels Archives*, Vol. III (7), pp. 157, 161 (in Russian).

level of the development of the productive forces and the needs of society.

As a complex social phenomenon, science has a definite relationship with the classes of society and its political and ideological superstructure, and is also connected with production and economy. Social sciences in contrast to natural sciences are more closely linked with the interests of classes and consequently their conclusions, particularly the application of their achievements in practice, have a clearly defined class character. In a class society there cannot be non-class philosophy, political economy, jurisprudence, and so forth.

The relationship between natural sciences and classes is much more difficult to qualify. By themselves natural scientific laws and concepts, experimental results and mathematical formulas obviously have no class content. Various classes can apply natural scientific discoveries under diverse modes of production to further their own interests. But it would be wrong to imagine that natural sciences are not subject to political or ideological influence.

The content of any science is limited neither to the accumulated experimental material nor to the particular laws and formulas derived, or conclusions drawn from it. By cognising the laws of the objective world, science in one or another way influences people's world outlook which has a class character in a class society. In this respect science is closely bound up with the ideology of society. The ideology of different classes and parties makes its way into science through philosophy, religion and morality. The ideology which dominates a given society is imposed on scientists in different ways: through traditions and the system of education and by direct ideological and political influence. The general trend in scientists' thinking is influenced by the conditions of bourgeois society, by the domination of idealism and metaphysics in the modern capitalist society.

Nonetheless, progressive scientists in capitalist countries are becoming increasingly aware that the reactionary imperialist ideology hampers scientific progress and that only dialectical-materialist philosophy can extricate science from ideological impasses.

The history of science irrefutably proves that the rates

of scientific progress are steadily increasing. The gradual accumulation of facts and discoveries in different fields of knowledge leads to a rapid advancement of science, to a scientific and technical revolution, as is strikingly evidenced by the contemporary epoch. Twentieth century science has made a series of cardinal discoveries many of which have radically changed the basis of industrial production. Among these achievements special mention should be made of the unravelling of the mystery of the atomic nucleus, man's penetration into outer space, and cybernetics. "Far more scientific work has been done in the last fifty years," wrote John Bernal, a distinguished British scientist, "than in the whole of previous history. And this is no mere quantitative growth; at the same time there has been greater advance in the knowledge of the fundamental nature of a matter, animate and inanimate, than in any comparable period in the past. We may reasonably speak of a second *scientific revolution* in the twentieth century."¹

There are about two million scientific workers in the world today, and their numerical growth is much faster than the natural increase in the population. The volume of scientific work doubles almost every decade.

Science exerts an enormous influence on social progress. The swift development of science and the practical implementation of its achievements, scientific and technical and social progress are closely connected with each other. Science is playing an ever increasing role in social development. The transformation of science into a direct productive force of which Marx wrote a century ago, is constantly gathering momentum. Deeply penetrating into the production sphere, science makes it possible to automate production processes with the help of machines and without the direct participation of man. The application of the latest scientific achievements is a real scientific and technical revolution connected with complete automation, mechanisation, chemicalisation of production, and so forth.

The social consequences of scientific and technical progress under modern capitalism are wholly different from those under socialism. Monopoly capital uses scientific

¹ J. D. Bernal, *Science in History*, London, 1954, p. 491.

research and technological improvements to obtain maximum profit, intensify labour and exploitation of the working people. Under state-monopoly capitalism scientific and technical discoveries always turn against the working people and give rise to unemployment. The imperialists use the achievements of human intellect to the detriment of man himself. A great calamity for mankind is the *militarisation* of science. The lion's share of allocations for science is spent on military research. Over 50 per cent of U.S. scientists and engineers are employed in this sphere. The militarisation of science lends its development an increasingly anti-humanistic, man-hating character. And it is not science that is to blame, but imperialism which wants to unleash a thermonuclear war on mankind. Progressive scientists are gravely alarmed at this trend in the development of science and speak up for peace and social progress.

In bourgeois society scientific financing and planning are conducted in the interests of the monopolies. In the contemporary epoch scientific research is impossible without large laboratories, powerful accelerators of nuclear particles or other very expensive installations. Research, therefore, is either financed by the monopolies or directly by the state. Scientists become increasingly dependent on state-monopoly capitalism. The majority of U.S. scientists work in research centres or universities which are controlled either by the state or by giant monopoly corporations.

Thus, the bourgeoisie strives to turn the scientific and technical revolution into a major means for mobilising forces to stave off its inevitable historical doom.

The situation is totally different under socialism. Having emancipated science from "filthy capitalist self-interest", to quote Lenin, the socialist social system assigned it genuinely humane tasks. Under socialism science becomes a social force capable of satisfying the fundamental requirements of society. It transforms the nature of man's labour and his entire material and spiritual mode of life. Since the establishment of Soviet rule science in Russia is enjoying the constant concern of the Party and the people. Even in the hardest years the socialist state stinted no means to finance the establishment of an extensive network of scientific research institutions and the training of

scientific personnel. Today there are more than 700,000 scientific workers, or 25 per cent of the world's total, in the U.S.S.R. Soviet science has enormously contributed to the world's scientific and technical progress and has made outstanding headway in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, geology and other branches of knowledge. The Soviet Union's great achievements in space exploration are a concentrated reflection of the successes scored in many fields of modern scientific knowledge.

Under socialism Marxist-Leninist social science becomes a scientific basis for administering society. It studies the economic, political and cultural processes in the development of the new social system, the relations between people and man's spiritual world. The development of socialist society is guided in conformity with the objective laws which are studied by social science. As it develops socialism draws on everything advanced and progressive that human genius creates. And that is the earnest of socialism's invincibility.

Chapter IX

SOCIAL PROGRESS

Human history is a law-governed process of the development and succession of socio-economic formations, each being an integral social organism with its own characteristic features. But history is not a simple replacement or succession of formations. It is a progressive process in which each new phase, arising on the basis of conditions prepared by the past, constitutes a higher stage of development.

1. The Concept and Criterion of Social Progress

The concept of social progress in its developed form first appeared in modern social philosophy. The slow rate of development of the slave-owning and feudal societies prevented most thinkers of those days, particularly those who adhered to reactionary social views, from noticing its onward movement. In the early stages of history, the kaleidoscope of political events (succession of monarchs, wars, collapse of empires, etc.), viewed against the background of relatively invariable material conditions, usually gave rise to scepticism and pessimism about the social development. Most of the ancient writers regarded history either as a regression from the ancient "Golden Age" (Hesiod, Seneca, later the Christian teaching about "Paradise Lost") or as a cyclic process with recurring stages (Plato, Aristotle, Polybius). But there were exceptions, Titus Carus Lucretius, for example, who expressed the interests of the advanced sections of the slave-owning class and upheld historical optimism in his philosophical poem *De Natura Rerum*. The Christian philosophy of history, which triumphed in Europe in the epoch of feudalism and which

was full of grief for the "Paradise lost for ever", was one of undisguised pessimism. True, outwardly, this pessimism was somewhat moderated by the hopes for the coming of the Messiah, but these hopes had nothing in common with real history because the "Kingdom of God" was promised "in another world". Engels wrote that the Christians, "having created a special 'history of the Kingdom of God', negate the intrinsic significance of real history and recognise only the significance of their unworldly, abstract and, what is more, fictitious history; claiming that mankind reaches consummation in their Christ, they attribute to history a false end aim, allegedly achieved by Christ; they cut history short in midstream and therefore, for the sake of consistency, are forced to depict the next eighteen centuries as wild nonsense and utter nothingness."¹

The sight of world history causes a Christian philosopher merely to regret the vanity and transiency of human activities. "And so when you see these great empires—I do not say kings and emperors—that caused the whole Universe to tremble, flash by before your eyes, when you see the ancient and new Assyrians, Medians, Persians, Greeks and Romans rise and fall one after another before your eyes, this horrifying collapse makes you feel that there is nothing lasting in the human world and that inconstancy and instability are the lot of human activity."²

The emergence of the capitalist mode of production and the rapid development of science and technology it entailed caused progressive 17th and 18th century philosophers to renounce the theological approach to the history of society. The social thought of the ideologists of the rising bourgeoisie was permeated with historical optimism; it was impregnated with the ardent belief that with the development of reason man's future was bound to be better than his past, that society was progressing, that the "Golden Age" and the genuine "realm of Reason" lay ahead and not in the past.

"Man's ability to improve is boundless indeed," French 18th century Enlightener Jean-Antoine Condorcet wrote.

¹ Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 1, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1958, S. 545.

² G. V. Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. II, pp. 638-39 (in Russian).

He was convinced that sooner or later there would come "a time when the sun will shine on an earth populated only by free people who recognise no master other than their reason; when tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments will exist only in history and in theatres."¹ Condorcet held that human progress was subordinated to certain general laws and that their knowledge helped foresee, direct and accelerate social development.

The concept of social progress advanced by Enlighteners was profoundly revolutionary by nature; it substantiated the break-up of feudal relations and heralded the birth of a new society; it was on its basis that the numerous systems of utopian socialism rose and developed. At the same time it contained a whole range of major theoretical errors. First, it lacked a historical outlook on things. In their criticism of feudalism, the Enlighteners neither could nor wanted to explain the medieval phenomena, which they hated, from a historical point of view, and wrongly viewed them merely as a pause in history, as a period of "wholesale barbarity". Second, it was impossible to establish an objective material criterion of social progress on the basis of philosophical idealism that was dominant then. Consequently, they used as criterion such idealistic factors as man's intellect, culture and self-consciousness. Abstract arguments about "progress in general" and its idealistic motive forces, naturally, were not scientific. The decline of revolutionary enthusiasm and disappointment in the "realm of Reason" proclaimed by the Enlighteners, on the one hand, and the development of positive historical knowledge, on the other, were bound to lead to the crisis of their concept of progress, which rested on abstract ideals rather than on concrete historical knowledge.

The most profound pre-Marxist theoretical interpretation of the problem of progress was given by Hegel, whose concept was indissolubly bound up with his dialectics. "Development," he wrote, "is an onward movement from the imperfect to the more perfect, and the former should not be taken in the abstract *merely* as something imper-

¹ J. A. Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, Paris, 1822, p. 264.

fect but as something that at the same time contains its opposite, what may be called the perfect as embryo, as urge."¹ According to Hegel, history is not simple *change but progress in the consciousness of freedom*, in the course of which the old serves as an indispensable foundation for the new. Each historical people performs a definite mission and then gives way to another. But, linking historical progress with the self-development of the world spirit, Hegel could not explain concretely the transition from one stage of social development to another. Why does a new, so-called historically progressive people emerge? Because, Hegel replies, it gains deeper knowledge of freedom than its predecessor. But why does it gain deeper but not the whole knowledge? To this question Hegel replies merely by referring to the "world spirit". Moreover, according to him, social development reached completion with the Prussian monarchy, and the Hegelian philosophy of history itself turns into theodicy, into justification of God in history.

The dialectical materialist conception of history, elaborated by the genius of Marx and Engels and profoundly developed by Lenin, has alone been capable of producing a genuinely scientific theory of social progress.

First let us examine the concept of progress. The most common category which fixes the general that is inherent in any process, showing the existence of differences in one and the same volume taken at two points differing in time is the concept of *change*. The concept of *development* is more narrow and therefore fuller in content. It characterises the law-governed and integral change of a system, a change not of separate elements but of the internal structure of the object. Movement, as a change in general, is absolute, it embraces all the changes in all systems. The concept of development is relative and can be applied to a definite system only.

Still narrower and richer in content is the concept of *progress* which reflects the line of ascent in the development of a system, its movement from lower to higher forms. Marx stressed that "the concept of progress should

¹ G. Hegel, *Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, I. Halbband, Leipzig, 1920, S. 137.

not generally be taken in ordinary abstraction".¹ The concepts of progress and regress have a definite meaning only with regard to the development of a particular system.

Human society is an extremely complex, and at the same time a very interesting system which includes a multiplicity of subsystems (state, family, morality, science, art, etc.). Since their development is more or less uneven, it is impossible to arrive at any general conclusions if progress or regress is judged on the basis of separate aspects of life. One is justified to speak of social progress only if there is social advancement in general, in the decisive spheres of social life. The most important is the economic sphere, the development of the mode of production of material values.

It should be noted that in addition to studying social progress from the integral, general sociological viewpoint while presenting an outline of the general theory of historical materialism, as is done in the given case, it is also justifiable to survey progress in moral consciousness, science, art, law and other specific spheres of social life. Here progress can be scientifically understood only if studied together with progress in the general sociological sense; at the same time it doubtlessly possesses a high degree of relative independence and therefore is the subject matter of ethics, history of art, jurisprudence, history of science and other special branches of knowledge, on the basis of historical materialist methodology.

Every socio-economic formation—prior to communism—is a definite irreversible cycle of development in which the line of ascent ends sooner or later. But inasmuch as there is a definite law-governed continuity in human history as a whole, the material and spiritual values created within the framework of a given social structure do not disappear with it. New generations start their historical creative work where their predecessors had stopped, and this imparts to the historical process the character of uninterrupted progressive development, and not that of simple change or succession of social forms.

The basis and criterion of social progress should be

¹ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Moscow, 1939, p. 29.

sought in the principal laws of historical development, that is, in the sphere of material life. Of the two aspects of the mode of production, the development of productive forces expresses the uninterruptedness of historical development. The progressive development of productive forces is characterised primarily by the continued development and improvement of the means of labour ensuring the growth of labour productivity.

However, improvement of the means of labour and production processes is organically interconnected with the improvement of the human element of productive forces, i.e., manpower, whose development imparts a fresh powerful impetus to the growth of the productivity of social labour. The growth of labour productivity, which may be expressed quantitatively, is one of the most important general laws governing social development, which operates throughout human history. The more material production develops, the bigger the role played in it by mental activity and the smaller the role of physical strength. The development of technology and productive forces is attended by the development of science which, to quote Marx, is the spiritual potential of production.

The historical development and improvement of productive forces and man's growing mastery over nature are an absolutely indisputable fact. But the development of productive forces, despite the contradictory nature of this process, is accompanied by the development of relations of production and other forms of social relations. While the level of development of the productive forces shows the extent of man's mastery over nature, the character of relations of production makes it possible to gauge the degree of maturity of social organisation itself.

Each historical socio-economic formation had a higher type of relations of production than the one before it. In this sphere progress was manifested in the fact that the new relations of production accelerated the development of the productive forces and provided man with slightly greater opportunities for development. However much a serf may have suffered from the feudal yoke, he, nevertheless, had more freedom than an ancient slave. He was not only a direct productive force, but also the creator of an original culture, and when the feudal system neared

its end, it was the peasant movement that chiefly determined the character and scope of bourgeois revolutions.

However oppressive the capitalist discipline of hunger and however false the bourgeois democracy may be, the freedom from personal dependence opens before the workers such prospects about which no serf could have ever dreamed. From the point of view of their organisation, their spiritual development and the role they play in society, workers in capitalist society are immeasurably superior to all the former exploited classes.

The faster social development proceeds, the greater is the mass of people taking an active part in historical action. "With the thoroughness of the historical action," Marx wrote, "the size of the mass whose action it is will therefore increase."¹ The growth of the role played by the masses in the historical process is a decisive aspect and a very important indicator of social progress.

Each socio-economic formation, though itself historically limited, represents a new and higher stage than its predecessor. But when this new social structure exhausts its potentialities and begins to retard the development of the productive forces and other aspects of social life, it too is rejected by the progressive forces maturing in its bosom. Thus historical development, discarding the obsolete forms that restrain it, preserves and develops their vital content.

The materialist understanding of history allows to give a positive answer to the question about the existence of the objective criterion of social progress, both in application to different spheres and to human society as a whole.

Society (or social progress) is all the more progressive the more objective possibilities it offers for raising labour productivity and development of the productive forces, for the unhampered development and independent historical creativity of the main productive force and subject of history—the working masses, for the growth and satisfaction of their material and spiritual needs and for the development and application of their creative abilities. Within the

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Critique*, p. 110.

framework of this criterion special attention must be paid to the role played by the *productive forces* which are steadily progressing along the ascendant line and the *productivity of labour* (viewed from the standpoint of its dynamics) as *general sociological* categories which mirror the most important aspects of social life, including the level of technical development, the state of the production and other social relations.

A generalised criterion of social progress makes it possible to draw a strictly scientific and objective distinction between the processes and phenomena occurring in society from the point of view of their historical progressiveness.

The Marxist-Leninist theory of progress differs in principle from the bourgeois theories which set the development of technology apart from socio-political conditions.

It may be noted that Lenin regarded the interests of development of productive forces (and, correspondingly, of labour productivity) as the supreme criterion of social progress and linked this indicator organically with the working masses' living conditions.¹ The same technical and economic problems, arising in conditions where the level of productive forces is the same, are solved differently, and, what is especially important, have different social consequences in the capitalist and socialist countries. It is not so much technological progress that is important as the question of who benefits by it and how it influences the living conditions of the broad masses.

An important law of social development in the conditions of pre-communist formations is the periodical disruption of history's general advance by reverse movements. Lenin stresses that "it is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong to regard the course of world history as smooth and always in a forward direction, without occasional gigantic leaps back", that "history advances by zigzags and roundabout ways".² The reverse movement, regress, may affect both the system as a whole (for instance, disintegration of an obsolete socio-economic formation) and different elements of a developing system. Taking advantage of the contradictory tendencies of social de-

¹ See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 242; Vol. 29, p. 427.

² Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 310.

velopment, the reactionary classes can for a time prevail over the progressive forces and restore the obsolete social and political forms (what are called epochs of reaction). Moreover, the progressive development of some phenomena and elements is often accompanied by the decline and degradation of others. Reactionary phenomena, however, are merely a product of disintegration of obsolete social forms and their replacement by new ones which have absorbed all the solid and valuable elements of the preceding forms.

Society's history is made by people. "*History*," Marx wrote, "*does nothing*, it possesses *no* immense wealth, it '*wages no battles*'. It is *man*, real living man, that does all that, that possesses and fights; 'history' is not a person apart, using man as a means for *its own* particular aims; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims."¹ It follows, therefore, that it is social man who is the creator and vehicle of social progress; not a man *in general*, however, but *specific social and class forces* of society.

The leading role in the struggle for peace and social progress in present-day society is played by Marxist-Leninist parties which unite all the progressive, revolutionary forces. The path of the Communists is thorny and arduous. They have many enemies and opponents. Diverse and still powerful forces of world reaction, the forces of the enemies of social progress, are rallying under the banner of anti-communism. Nor does the communist movement itself develop without very serious contradictions. The influence of opportunism of all brands—revisionism, dogmatism, "Left" sectarianism and nationalism—at times sways not only certain party leaders but whole parties, thus undermining the strength and unity of the world communist movement.

Reaction's victories, however, can be only partial and temporary. The revolutionary movement is invincible, and precisely because it is expressive of the progressive tendency of world social development, of the vital interests of the broad working masses, for the sake of which society is advancing along the path of progress.

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Critique*, p. 125.

2. Types of Social Progress

Progress has been going on all through human history. But its rates and types differ and depend on the nature of the social system. Typical of the primitive-communal, slave-owning and feudal societies were slow rates of development, recurrences of one and the same cycle and considerable periods without anything *new* appearing in their content. Explaining the protracted crisis of the slave-owning system, Engels wrote among other things: "Wherever *slavery* is the main form of production it turns labour into servile activity, consequently makes it dishonourable for freemen. Thus the way out of such a mode of production is barred, while on the other hand slavery is an impediment to more developed production, which urgently requires its removal. This contradiction spells the doom of all production based on slavery and of all communities based on it. A solution comes about in most cases through the forcible subjection of the deteriorating communities by other, stronger ones (Greece by Macedonia and later Rome). As long as these themselves have slavery as their foundation there is merely a shifting of the centre and a repetition of the process on a higher plane until (Rome) finally a people conquers that replaces slavery by another form of production."¹

Capitalism vastly accelerates the rates of social development while aggravating the antagonism of social relations. It should be borne in mind that internal antagonistic development, which manifests itself in its extreme unevenness, disproportionality and spontaneity, is not a transient, fortuitous or particular trait of the exploiting society but *the basic law of all class-antagonistic formations*. "No antagonism, no progress," Marx wrote about the exploiting epoch. "This is the law that civilisation has followed up to our days."²

Development in the conditions of all exploiting formations is thus typified by antagonisms, unevenness and zig-zags. Engels wrote: "Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilisation, its whole develop-

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 478.

² Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 61.

ment moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class."¹

In antagonistic formations progress in any one respect is usually attended by regress in another. The progress of technology and the development of social division of labour enormously increase its productivity. The reverse side of progress, however, are man's transformation into an appendage of the machine, dehumanisation of labour, increasing social alienation and exploitation. Scientific progress leads to the appearance of new means of mass annihilation. The relatively high living standards in the developed capitalist countries have been achieved to a considerable extent through the ruthless exploitation of dependent countries.

Capitalism, on the one hand, creates an unparalleled wealth of requirements and forms of human activity, and, on the other hand, it dooms the working masses to monotonous, stupefying labour which maims the individual and supplants all the physical and spiritual feelings with the one crude feeling of *possession*. This disparity between the material wealth of capitalist society and the crisis of its spiritual culture, the crisis of the individual, is especially evident in the contemporary epoch.

Under capitalism which has entered a period of general crisis, there is an unprecedentedly acute contrast between the amazing achievements of the latest scientific and technical revolution and the depth of moral degradation of the ruling exploiting "elite" (fascism, policy of nuclear-rocket intimidation, and so forth).

The zigzag nature of progress under capitalism finds expression in the fact that onward development is periodically interrupted and periods of rise alternate with periods of decline and reaction. Wars and economic crises destroy part of the accumulated productive forces. "Capitalism is progressive because it destroys the old methods of production and develops productive forces," Lenin

¹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 325.

wrote, "yet at the same time, at a certain stage of development, it retards the growth of productive forces. It develops, organises, and disciplines the workers—and it crushes, oppresses, leads to degeneration, poverty, etc."¹

This is particularly true of imperialism, which is a turn to reaction all along the line, which seeks to destroy even the democratic institutions that had been established earlier and breeds reactionary trends in ideology and culture. Mankind is now entering the period of unprecedented scientific and technical revolution—mastery of nuclear energy, space conquest, development of modern chemistry and biology, automation of production and other major achievements of science and technology. But capitalist relations of production considerably weaken the potentialities of the scientific and technical revolution. This revolution can be consummated and, what is most important, its fruit can be used in the interest of the masses only on the basis of new, socialist social relations.

The antagonistic contradictoriness of historical progress that is peculiar to exploiting society is vividly reflected in Western sociology. The idea of progress was the most popular and exciting idea of the 19th century. Politicians swore by progress, scientists wrote of progress, poets waxed enthusiastic about progress. But the theories of progress of the victorious bourgeoisie differed substantially from the conceptions of the revolutionary bourgeoisie.

The ideologists of the rising bourgeoisie were very critical of the state of things at their time and regarded the idea of progress as a weapon of asserting the future. Beginning with the 1830s, the bourgeois theories of progress appealed more and more to the present instead of the future. But while they saw (and quite rightly) progress in the replacement of feudal relations by the capitalist, the ideologists of the victorious bourgeoisie no longer saw the possibility of further social development. With the victory of capitalist relations, with the establishment of capitalist "civilisation" history, they held, had done its job and had actually come to an end. There was nothing more to be

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 348.

done, and all that remained was to admire what had been achieved and to embellish it in various ways. While the Enlighteners urged to fight for a better future, the "aim of history" was now proclaimed achieved. Thus, the idea of progress, one-sidedly turned towards the past, gradually became an instrument of conformity to the existing system.

Rejecting the scientific analysis of social processes proper, the Western bourgeois sociology since the mid-19th century preferred to discuss the "laws of evolution" in general, regarding it as an automatic process which people are powerless to change. The "law of evolution" proclaimed capitalist "free competition" to be the main motive force of social development.

But as the antagonistic contradictions of capitalism grew more acute, sociological optimism also weakened and Western bourgeois sociology became more and more beset by doubts, scepticism and pessimism.

First the 1848 Revolution and then the Paris Commune showed the more astute bourgeois ideologists that the existing order was unstable, and filled them with pessimism and fear. Although there was still talk about progress, especially in view of the tempestuous development and the increasing number of discoveries in science and technology, the development of capitalist society's productive forces far from eliminating its basic contradictions, on the contrary, aggravated them to the extreme. This partly explained the disappointment with and then the undisguised animosity towards scientific and technical progress which penetrated into Western sociology in the last thirty years or so of the 19th century and subsequently manifested themselves in it in increasing measure.

Typical of the mood of the bourgeois intellectuals of the time was the entry made by the well-known French writers, the Goncourt brothers, in their *Diary* in 1869: "They were saying that Berthelot had predicated that a hundred years from now, thanks to physical and chemical science, man would know of what the atom is constituted, that he would be able to moderate the light of the sun at will, extinguish and kindle it again.... To all of this we raise no objection, but we have a feeling that, when this time comes in science, God with his white beard will come down to earth, swinging a bunch of keys, and will say to

humanity, the way they say at 5 o'clock in the Salon: 'Closing time, gentlemen!'"¹

With the advent of the era of imperialism and especially of the general crisis of capitalism, dismal moods began to grip bourgeois philosophers more and more. Nietzsche-Spengler pessimism, characteristic of the reactionary Western ideology of the early 20th century, not only expressed the bourgeoisie's perplexity and fear of the future, but also the appearance of new, subtler forms in the political and ideological defence of capitalism.

In the 19th century capitalism was usually portrayed as the best social system and the pinnacle of human evolution. In the current century, many bourgeois ideologists finding it no longer possible to ignore the negative aspects of capitalism are even playing them up, claiming at the same time that they are characteristic of human being in general. To all appearances they want to persuade people that the struggle against these evils is doomed to failure from the very start and can only bring them new and needless suffering. Life is abominable and terrible, social pessimist philosophers repeat over and over again, and it cannot be otherwise; there is no need to fight, nothing to strive for, nothing to hope for; the better man knows the world, the clearer his own impotence becomes. And the only way out is to abandon this world, to seek salvation by retreating into oneself, to try to save at least one's own wretched existence in the general catastrophe.

Such an opinion of society and man leaves no room for the concept of progress. It is deleted from textbooks and encyclopaedias and is proclaimed an "optimistic illusion" contrary to scientific facts and mankind's historical experience.

As the French philosopher Michel de Montaigne has said, "when hailstones fall on a man's head, he thinks the whole hemisphere is lashed by thunderstorm and tempest". Something of the sort is happening to many Western sociologists. Sensing the instability of capitalist society, which is clearly on the decline, they are trying to doubt the very idea of history's onward march.

¹ *Journal des Goncourt*, Troisième volume, 1866-70, Paris, 1888, pp. 287-88.

On the whole there are *three* basic views on the problem of progress characteristic of the modern sociological trends that are the most widespread in the capitalist countries.

1. Complete negation of social progress, especially by stressing the antagonistic nature of the historical process and absolutising the specific regressive processes of present-day capitalism.

2. The thesis that it is in principle impossible objectively, truthfully and scientifically to solve the problem of social progress and its criteria, a thesis whose gnoseological basis is *absolutisation of the relativity of historical knowledge*.

3. Interpretation of social progress as *an unlimited possibility of improving society within the framework of contemporary capitalism*.

The *first* of these lines manifests itself most graphically in diverse latter-day versions of the theory of historical cycle.

The idea of historical cycle in itself is not new in the history of social thought. Italian philosopher Giovanni Battista Vico affirmed back in the 18th century that every nation passes through three stages in its development: the divine—mankind's childhood, the heroic—mankind's youth and the human—mankind's maturity. In Vico's theory, the idea of cycles was the first step towards understanding the laws of social development, an attempt to find in the endless stream of historical phenomena a certain degree of order and definite recurrency.

Utterly different are the contemporary cyclic theories of social development, which are designed to prove the impossibility of social progress and try to pass off the crisis of capitalist civilisation for the crisis of civilisation in general and each forward step made by mankind for a step bringing it closer to its doom.

Thus, from the point of view of Oswald Spengler, a reactionary German philosopher whose book *Untergang des Abendlandes* scored a sensational hit with the bourgeois intelligentsia and petty bourgeoisie after the First World War, history is not a single process but a simple coexistence of cultures, each of them absolutely unique, original and exclusive. Each culture passes through strictly definite stages of development, which not only have the same con-

tent but even the same duration. "Just as the metamorphosis of insect in each given instance lasts a definite number of predetermined days," he says, so does "each culture, each of its initial stages, each rise and fall, each of its essential phases have a definite duration of recurrence that is always the same and always symbolic."¹ This recurrence of cycles and cultures discloses no succession, to say nothing of the law of progress. What is more, Western civilisation is doomed, according to Spengler, and this, in his opinion, means the doom of civilisation in general.

Arnold Toynbee, a well-known British contemporary historian and sociologist, preaches something similar, though in a more subtle and flexible form, in his twelve-volume work *A Study of History*. His history of mankind is divided into a number of local "civilisations", each of which passes through the same stages—genesis, growth, breakdown and disintegration.

Analysing each civilisation as a self-contained exclusive whole and regarding the links between civilisations as secondary, Toynbee in principle does not negate progress in history. Just like a wheel which revolves monotonously and thus sets the cart in motion, he says, the cyclic movement of civilisations reveals certain progress in a definite direction. There is progress, he affirms, but only in the sense that people are gradually accustoming themselves to God. In short, the theoretical invalidity of the picture of universal history, drawn by the cyclic theory of social development, consists in the absolutisation of special and even separate processes and phenomena in history (collapse of concrete social organisms or different cultures) and in the neglect of processes which are of *general and decisive* importance in world history (onward development of mankind as a single whole from the lowest modes of production to the highest).

The *second line* is relativistic criticism of the idea of progress and is primarily linked with positivist philosophy. In 1923 an American sociologist William W. Ogburn introduced the concept "social change" which soon became widely popular.

¹ O. Spengler, *Untergang des Abendlandes*, München, 1922, Bd. 1, S. 146-47.

In one of the main theoretical reports delivered at the Third World Congress of Sociology, which was held in 1956 and was especially dedicated to social changes, a well-known West German sociologist Leopold von Wiese eulogised the "social change" category because it presupposed "the more cautious and sceptical evaluation of the vital and social variations in human life and of the difference between the generations". Contemporary sociology, he said, tends "to refrain from any judgement as to better or worse ... and to determine merely alternation or change".¹ The concept "change", echoes American sociologist Harry E. Barnes, is more definite and precise than the concept "progress" because it does not contain any evaluating factor and permits factual verification. The question of whether a given number of changes are progressive or regressive, Barnes says, always leads to a dispute concerning the criterion of the corresponding evaluation, while the concept "change" does not require it.

These ideas are widespread in Western historiography too.

The French historian Maurice Crouzet says that it is impossible to compare different civilisations and to speak of "progress", "laws of development", etc. The task of historical science, to his mind, is "to describe and explain and not to judge by comparing historical reality with some type of ideal civilisation".²

Propounding "historism", many Western historians resolutely object to regarding the past as an indispensable stage in the preparation of the present and declare the idea of progress subjective and scientifically groundless. Each epoch, in their view, is something individual, unique, permitting no comparison with other epochs. Negation of progress with the aid of the "social change" concept is theoretically untenable because its exponents concentrate attention solely on the *relative* nature of ideas and conceptions about social progress (which undoubtedly can bear in greater or lesser degree the stamp of subjectivism). They ignore the existence of *objectively* stable

¹ *Transactions of the Third World Congress of Sociology*, Vol. 1, Amsterdam, 1956, pp. 2-3.

² *Histoire générale des civilisations*, Paris, 1953, Vol. I, p. IX.

and *progressive* tendencies in human history which are *decisive* for social development.

The momentous successes in the spheres of scientific, technological, socio-economic, political and cultural development in the U.S.S.R. and in the countries of the socialist system as a whole, and the obvious headway made of late by the young developing countries which emerged victorious from the national liberation struggle, strikingly disprove the socially pessimistic and sceptical views of the prospects of world development. It is this fact that is responsible for the appearance of certain new tendencies in illuminating the problems of social advancement in the social philosophy of the present-day West.

The ideas of development and progress, as the British sociologist Morris Ginsberg, one of the best-known Western specialists in the problem of progress, was compelled to admit, "are indeed now coming into prominence again as a result of the social transformations due to the tremendous advances in technology and the socialist revolutions of our time. The spread of these movements to the Asian and African worlds has intensified interest in comparative studies and has raised afresh the problem of levels of development."¹

In this situation another, *third line* in the treatment of the problem of social progress has appeared in the West. The imperative need of creating a sociological conception which would recognise historical progress in principle (with definite stages, possibilities of comparing the levels of development, etc.), and, at the same time, proclaim the boundless possibilities of capitalist progress has been embodied fully, and in a manner adequately suiting state-monopoly capitalism, in the so-called theory of the stages of economic growth elaborated by Walt W. Rostow. This theory is closely intertwined with such widespread contemporary Western socio-political concepts as "welfare state", "income balance", "democratisation of capital" and other ideological theories advertising the bourgeois system.

Rostow's theory, outlined chiefly in his book *The Stages of Economic Growth. A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960), as

¹ M. Ginsberg, "Evolution and Progress", *Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, Vol. 3, Melbourne, London, Toronto, 1961, p. XI.

well as in other works and public statements, was advanced to the fore of contemporary bourgeois sociology at the Fifth World Congress of Sociology in Washington in 1962.

The main theoretical error of Rostow's theory lies in the fact that his stages of growth (or progress) cover chiefly diverse *technical and economic indices (and sometimes formally political ones) while the socio-economic structure and relations of production, which determine the essence of every society, are practically ignored*. There is no analysis in his theory of the class content of social development and the role played by social revolutions as turning points in transition from old society to a new, more progressive one.

In his classification of the stages of society's progressive development, Rostow does not keep to one principle—his scheme suffers from eclecticism and lack of inner logic and consistency. While the first four stages cover mainly technological, economic and scientific indices, the fifth—the highest stage, the “epoch of high mass consumption”—covers the peculiarities of consumption and services, and the suggested sixth stage is linked with the number of children in a family.

Here, the definite simple criterion of social progress in fact disappears.

Rostow's interpretation of communism as a more or less fortuitous “disease of transitional society”, which will inevitably be overcome in the highest stage—the stage of “high mass consumption”—is highly typical of a bourgeois ideologist. Communism, he asserts, does not fit into society's normal state and movement. Capitalism, on the other hand, notably in the United States, is proclaimed a society which has allegedly reached the peak of historical progress, the “epoch of high mass consumption”, and a model to be followed by all the peoples and states of the world. The grounds for this claim are the high level of production and especially average per capita consumption of such goods as automobiles, refrigerators, television sets, washing machines, etc.

Rostow and the other champions of “American progress” as an example for all to follow, completely ignore the fact that it is in the United States that the rule of capitalist monopolies with all its profoundly reactionary

consequences is most firmly established. For it is the United States that is the might, the fire and the sword behind all the most reactionary political regimes, the main source of the threat of a world nuclear-rocket war, a land of mass unemployment and rampant racial discrimination, where organised crime has reached unprecedented proportions and all sorts of social diseases affecting individuals are extremely widespread.

As for the claim about U.S. prosperity even President Johnson belied it when he declared that poverty and deprivation were still one of the most acute problems facing the United States. A book edited by Leon Keyserling, a prominent American economist, reveals that two-fifths of the U.S. population—77 million people!—suffer from poverty and privations and only 7 per cent are relatively well off.¹ This picture of “social progress” with all its contradictions and antagonisms is typical of the capitalist system.

3. New Type of Social Progress

More than a century ago Marx wrote that “the bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis of the new world: on the one hand, the universal intercourse founded upon the mutual dependency of mankind and the means of that intercourse; on the other hand, the development of the productive powers of man and the transformation of material production into a scientific domination of natural agencies. Bourgeois industry and commerce create these material conditions of a new world in the same way as geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth. When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch, . . . then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink nectar but from the skulls of the slain.”² This means that the victory of socialist revolution and establishment of communist formation give rise to a new type of social progress.

¹ See *Poverty and Deprivation in U.S.A., The Plight of the Two-Fifths of a Nation*, Conference on Economic Progress, 1962.

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 405-06.

In analysing the question of communist progress it should be borne in mind that the communist socio-economic formation itself goes through two stages of development—socialism and communism proper.

In principle, the distinctive features of the new *communist type of social progress*, the highest in history, are already manifest under socialism, inasmuch as it is based on the social ownership of the means of production, precludes exploitation of man by man and social antagonisms and creates the necessary conditions for the planned development of the economy, swift development of the productive forces and steady growth of labour productivity, and greater freedom and social justice for man, for all working people. Historically all this has been proved by the mighty progressive development of socialist countries.

At the same time, in socialist conditions, the concrete content and forms of progress are naturally influenced by the fact that the new formation is not yet fully mature economically, socially and spiritually (hence the inequality in the material living conditions of different people, in their cultural and technical level, in the degree of communist consciousness, etc.). But all these distinctive features and difficulties of onward development under socialism, on which contemporary bourgeois ideologists often base their speculations, cannot refute the indisputable fact that under socialism human progress loses its antagonistic and contradictory nature and becomes humane in essence because it is promoted in the interests of all working masses and peoples.

The humane nature of socialist progress stands out with the utmost clarity in the light of the 50 years' experience of the existence and development of the new society in the U.S.S.R. Abolition of all exploiting classes, industrialisation, collectivisation, the cultural revolution and the creation and consolidation of socialist democracy and statehood are all the chief and closely related milestones of the progressive development of socialist society, which is taking place in the interests of broad working masses. This development, based on the accelerated growth of the productive forces, has produced a radical change in social relations and fostered the social and moral-political unity of all social and national groups of Soviet society. All these

links of the revolutionary remaking of society were not an aim in itself; they occasioned fundamental changes in the condition of the working people: eradication of capitalist oppression, exploitation, social and national antagonisms and unemployment. A genuinely democratic society has appeared, and favourable conditions for the all-round development of the individual have been created. People's life became incomparably happier. The average life span in the world's first socialist state increased from 32 years (before the October Revolution) to 70 years.

The new type of social progress which is embodied in socialism and communism, reflects all the determining features of the mode of production typical of this society, its basis and superstructure. Under socialism and communism the rates of social progress are incomparably higher than in an antagonistic society.

The communist formation is more than just a higher social organism than capitalism. It means the end of mankind's pre-history, a leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom and, consequently, it means the appearance of a qualitatively new, higher type of social progress. The establishment and development of the new, communist social formation substantially changes the *basic content of social progress*. In capitalist society, the development of production is merely an aim in itself, and man is only a means of this development. Therefore progress in the decisive, economic sphere there is attended by the growing alienation and self-alienation of the individual in diverse manifestations and is consequently anti-humane in character.

Under communism, on the contrary, society comes to a point when, as Marx had foreseen, "the development of the social individual ... is the main basis of production and wealth".¹

The main content of social progress in a communist socio-economic formation, its essence, which manifests itself with the maturity of communist society, is the *free*, that is, unrestricted by any forces alien to the social man, *all-round and unbounded development of the individual*,

¹ "From the Unpublished Manuscripts of K. Marx", *Bolshevik*, Nos. 11 and 12, 1939 (in Russian).

and, consequently, the development of society's main and universal productive force. The C.P.S.U. Programme describes the goals and essence of progress in communist society in the most lucid and simple terms: communism accomplishes the historic mission of delivering all men from social inequality, from every form of oppression and exploitation, from the horrors of war, and proclaims *Peace, Labour, Freedom, Equality, Fraternity and Happiness* for all peoples of the earth.

Progress in a communist formation differs from that of exploiting formations by a range of concrete traits and features. Let us enumerate the main ones.

In the preceding formations, progress had an antagonistic character and was fostered directly in the interest of the ruling classes and definite groups of the population at the cost of great suffering of the masses. Progress in a communist formation is absolutely different in character, and onward development is promoted directly and solely *in the interest of the whole of society*, of all its groups and members for the sake and benefit of all people and each person taken separately. In general this line of progressive development reveals itself as a basic law in the very first phase of communist society—under socialism.

In the preceding formations, progress was profoundly uneven and disproportionate: the rapid development of some sides of social life was accompanied by the substantial lag, stagnation and even relative regression of others. In a communist formation progress is accomplished in all the spheres of social and private life, and is on the whole all-round and harmonious. Progress in one sphere actively promotes progress in another. The material, technical and socio-economic progress actively stimulates cultural progress, while the rise in the level of ideological education helps to create the material and technical basis of communism, form communist social relations and mould a new man.

Under communism harmonious relations between the individual and society are asserted on the basis of the unity of social and personal interests.

In the past epochs, the progress of some countries, societies and geographical regions was usually accomplished

at the expense of exploiting others and retarding their development.

In the communist epoch, the progress of some countries, republics and geographical regions actively promotes progress in others on the basis of all-round mutual assistance, comradesly co-operation and rational division of labour. This accelerates the development of the lagging countries and regions and leads to the general evening out of their levels of development.

Progress in a communist formation, unlike that in exploiting society, is all-embracing. It is the only type of progress destined to become truly *universal*, in the sense that sooner or later it will draw *all* countries and *all* peoples into its orbit and will ultimately rule supreme *throughout* the world.

Prior to the epoch of socialist revolution, economic progress in the main lacked conscious guidance and was, as a rule, unplanned and spontaneous (or semi-spontaneous).

Following the victory of socialist relations progress develops more and more on the basis of people's conscious and purposeful guidance of their own social being, in an increasingly planned manner, on the basis of social planning and prognostication for longer periods and growing accuracy. Lenin wrote in this connection: "We have now acquired an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years and what requires much more time."¹

Society's development is guided more and more directly by the masses led by the Marxist-Leninist party. In the first phase of communism, the masses administer society mainly through the socialist state and the special machine of public authority, which is called upon to express the state will of the working people and is controlled by them. Under full communism the masses will administer society directly inasmuch as the state as such will wither away and the necessary functions will be exercised within the framework of social self-government by all the members of society.

In the preceding epoch there could be no progress

¹ Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 483.

without bitter class struggle and social revolutions in which the broad masses expended a vast amount of energy and strength and lost a great many lives on the indispensable destructive activity linked with the abolition of the obsolete system.

In the communist formation the need for class struggle or social revolutions to solve the internal contradictions of onward development disappears once and for all. The negation of the old, which is an important factor in the development and solution of contradictions, remains but radically alters its character and becomes non-antagonistic. This non-antagonistic negation testifies to the unparalleled depth and all-embracing character of social progress, inasmuch as the entire energy of the people and all the values go to further positive, creative and not destructive aims.

In class-antagonistic formations, society's general progressive development was invariably interrupted by lengthy periods of regress and cyclic movement as a result of counter-revolutions, wars of aggrandisement and diverse crises which inevitably break out in the final phase of existence of any exploiting formation.

A feature of progress in a communist formation is its *uninterrupted character*. Crises, recessions and periods of regress are objectively alien to progress in a society delivered from exploitation. True, in the lower phase of the communist formation—under socialism—there are periods when social progress is retarded. But, they are due to the influence exerted by forces that are foreign to socialism and by the survivals of the past and are of temporary, transient nature and are eliminated by the internal forces of socialist society in its uninterrupted progressive development.

Being gradual in character progress in a communist formation is at the same time distinguished for its *unprecedentedly fast rates*.

The development of the formations preceding communism was restricted to certain bounds, and on reaching them progressive development within these formations exhausted itself. Social ownership of the means of production in the conditions of highly developed economy and all-round development of social man himself, opens bound-

less prospects for the growth of productive forces and the comprehensive development of society's material and spiritual life. This is the objective basis of the most important feature of communist progress—its *inexhaustibility and boundlessness*.

The end of class society is also the end of man's prehistory and the beginning of his real history. A man freed from all social oppression, from the subjugating influence of the old division of labour will develop his abilities and gifts to the full. The entire development of human society will be tremendously accelerated. Steadily taming the elements, society will also fully master the laws of its own development and its intricate and multiform social relations.

Communism completely emancipates society from the historical narrow-mindedness typical of the preceding formations, and opens boundless vistas for human progress.

* * *

The scientific theory of society, historical materialism, discloses the fundamental nature of social relations, reveals the objective laws of social development and the role played by different social factors in the lives of people, indicates the actual place and role of man in the social process, in the struggle of different social and class forces, and thoroughly substantiates the inevitability of the victory of socialism and communism. In this lies the great, ever-lasting significance of historical materialism.

REQUEST TO READERS

Progress Publishers would be glad to have your opinion of this book, its translation and design and any suggestions you may have for future publications.

Please send your comments to 21, Zubov-sky Boulevard, Moscow, U.S.S.R.